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ABSTRACT

This document contains 13 articles concerned with the best practices in the supervision of school psychological services. Included are: (1) "Motivating and Encouraging Staff" (John Anderson); (2) "Orienting New Staff to Professional Life in the Area Education Agency" (Bruce F. Jensen); (3) "Program Research, Development and Review in School Psychology" (Joe Ulman); (4) "Individualized Growth of Professionals" (Ed Smith); (5) "Administrative Communication" (Howard Jensen); (6) "Promoting and Expanding Professional Services and Roles" (Jack Montgomery); (7) "Designing and Providing Inservice for School Psychologists" (Dennis Sinclair); (8) "Best Practices in Personnel Evaluation" (Ron Jordan); (9) "Best Practices in Staff Morale, Spirit and Comradery" (Thomas Ciha); (10) "Operations of a Staff without a Designated Supervisor" (Jens B. Simonsen); (11) "Recruitment" (Larry Gile); (12) "The Supervisor as Practitioner" (Harvey A. Disenhouse); and (13) "Resolution of Staff Problems" (Jeff Hamarstrom). (NB)

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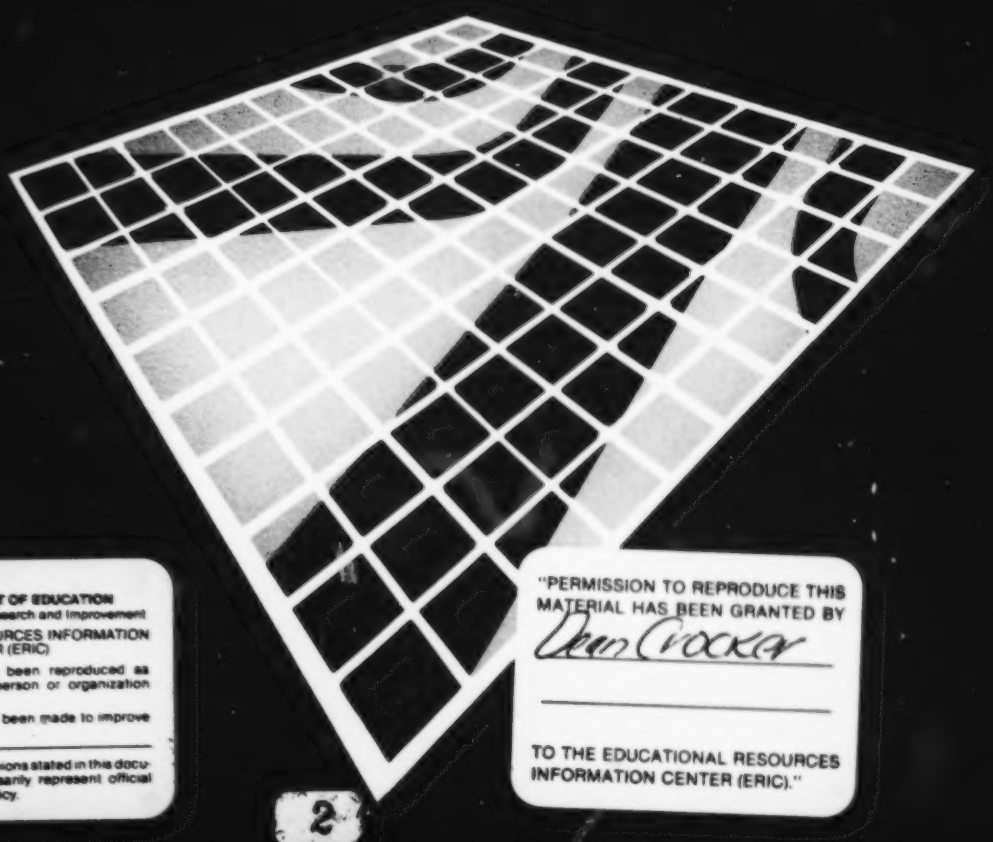
Best Practices in Supervision

School Psychological Services

Iowa Department of Public Instruction



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BEST PRACTICES IN THE SUPERVISION OF SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

Edited by:

Jeff Grimes and David Happe

Iowa Department of Education

1987

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Motivating and Encouraging Staff

John Anderson
AEA 1

Abstract

Iowa school psychology supervisors were surveyed regarding their current efforts to motivate and encourage their school psychology staff. These efforts are identified as well as motivational management principles from the professional management literature. Factors which may enhance or serve as barriers to staff motivation efforts are discussed and ideas for adding to the motivational repertoire of supervisors considered.

Introduction

As individuals with leadership responsibility, school psychology supervisors endeavor to assure the best quality psychological services to children. The key to this assurance is a competent, highly motivated staff of school psychologists. Beyond the ability of the supervisors to assess technical competence of school psychologists, the task of ongoing encouragement and motivation is critical to assure a professional, positive and productive staff.

This chapter will focus on 1) the rationale for the school psychology supervisor to assume an ongoing responsibility for staff motivation, 2) the present "state of the art" in staff motivation efforts by school psychology supervisors in Iowa, 3) factors which enhance or serve as barriers to motivating staff, 4) ideas from the professional literature which have been found effective in motivating staff to higher, more effective levels of service, and 5) considerations for further efforts to more effectively realize the potential of a school psychology staff.

Current Practice

When surveyed, Iowa school psychology supervisors unanimously agreed that they have a responsibility for motivating and encouraging staff. Several of the supervisors, however, were quick to point out that they could not assume sole responsibility for this effort. The essence of this disclaimer focused on the belief that each individual bears the responsibility for self-motivation and that the supervisor's role is essentially to support and encourage staff in their own personal efforts to maintain enthusiasm for their chosen profession.

This point of view embraces the concept of motivation defined as "an idea, need or emotion within the individual which excites him or her to action" (Waitley, 1978). Whether the supervisor is inclined to view motivation as an intrinsic personal responsibility or behaviorally, as the product of extrinsic positive consequences, it appears there is consensus that the school psychology supervisor can and should facilitiate the desire of school psychologists to realize their optimum potential.

Is a happy, self-actualized school psychologist the end goal of supervisor motivational efforts? Clearly not, according to Iowa supervisors, no matter how audible a goal this might be. The supervisors cite personal experience, supported by a considerable volume of professional management literature (Blanchard & Johnson, 1982; Fournies, 1978; Gellerman, 1968; Hill, 1984; LeBoeuf, 1985; McGregor, 1960; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Reber & Terry, 1981) which demonstrates that a highly motivated staff is directly related to greater productivity. For the

school psychologist this "productivity" translates into a direct benefit for children.

Presently school psychology supervisors employ a variety of methods to encourage and motivate their staff. It is noteworthy that survey results show similar methods are used by the majority of supervisors. This appears a function of the commonalities of agency structure and limited, tangible reinforcers available to supervisors, rather than a function of idea sharing among supervisors. The activities and methods identified by Iowa school psychology supervisors which areas used to motivate staff to be innovative, take risks, and go the extra mile were:

1. Frequent staff discussions of agency and professional issues - This effort at maintaining open communication has been cited by employees as the single most important factor desired from management (Stringer, 1984).

2. Provide a forum for direct staff input in decision making - One example of this given is a "psychology advisory council" which assists the supervisor on a variety of decisions such as test batteries, special projects, position statements, and discipline procedures.

3. Provide clear direction and technical knowledge - Peters and Waterman (1982) cite respect for knowledgeable leadership as a strong staff motivator. In their survey of school psychologist job satisfaction Solly & Hohensill (1986) found that an incongruence between supervisor/staff knowledge and background was a significant factor in staff job dissatisfaction. Huberman (1983), and Hood and Blackwell (1976) point out that information received by staff from a source with similar background and experience is likely to carry more weight than information received from outside "expert" sources. Implications for generic special education supervision of school psychologists, a trend related to the recent economic decline in Iowa, are obvious.

4. Run interference - As middle level managers school psychology supervisors often walk a tightrope between staff goals and contradictory administrative philosophies. Iowa supervisors identified their efforts to "cut red tape", advocate with administration for staff needs, and generally attempt to diminish barriers for school psychologists, as a critical facilitative function.

5. Support individual professional interests - Supervisors identified methods such as assisting staff with individual goal setting, purchase of materials, extended contracts, sanctioning time for special projects and research, individual consultation and feedback, access to specialized equipment and computers, conference leave time, and specialized assignments, to assist staff in pursuing individual professional interests.

6. Acknowledge individual effort - Supervisors spoke of their effort to recognize individual effort through verbal feedback, letters of commendation, securing recognition for staff members by administrators and the agency board of directors, write-ups in newsletters and newspapers, certificates of recognition, positive personnel evaluations, recognition of a staff member before the entire staff, and peer nominations for excellence.

7. Demonstrating personal interests - Efforts were cited to get to know staff members personally, to inquire after their welfare and demonstrate an interest in their personal successes and difficulties.

8. Foster professional development - Providing time and resources for staff participation in state projects, encouraging attendance at state and national conferences, organizing local staff inservices, providing reading and AV materials, and setting individual professional development goals, were several methods listed by supervisors.

9. Allowing staff autonomy - Recognizing the professional independence of staff to make competent daily decisions without supervisor "second guessing" was felt to be important for staff to function effectively and fee pride and personal responsibility for their decision making.

Generally, supervisors expressed the belief that encouraging and motivating staff requires a basic supervisory philosophy that most school psychologists desire to do a good job, contribute positively to the lives of children, and experience personal success. The activities described above are designed to facilitate this desire of the individual staff member.

Factors Which Enhance or Serve as Barriers to Motivating Staff

Most of the factors cited by Iowa school psychology supervisors which enhance staff motivation focused on supervisor attitude and personality. The supervisor perceived by staff as a charismatic leader who takes a personal interest in staff successes and problems is generally recognized as capable of engendering staff respect. This respect translates into a desire to put out extra effort and perform at a level of excellence.

Many supervisors felt that staff can be motivated by respect for a supervisor who demonstrates dedication to the profession, concern for individuals, advocacy for discipline goals, hard work, and an understanding of professional technical issues. Additional supervisor characteristics which help ensure a united and motivated staff were given as 1) making formal evaluation an opportunity to focus on positives and staff growth, 2) lead relevant meetings which provide needed information, 3) be able to take criticism without becoming defensive, 4) show appreciation of staff individuality, dignity, and personal worth, and 5) balance agency requirements with discipline needs. Above all, the supervisor who demonstrates a sense of partnership with his/her staff is felt to generate respect and comradery which results in a positive, motivated staff.

Just as a supervisor's personality can motivate it can also discourage. Preoccupation with rules and procedures, one-sided directives, and limited ability to empathize, all create negative attitudes on the part of staff. In addition, a number of more tangible disincentives were cited by Iowa school psychology supervisors which serve as barriers to a motivated staff. Examples include:

1. Workload - A heavy assignment spread over a large geographic area involving routine activities carried out to meet regulatory requirements is viewed as a significant disincentive.

2. Poor economy - The trend of diminishing resources with increasing needs is seen as discouraging.

3. Isolation/Geography - Being located far from other staff with little professional contact is seen as a demoralizing factor.

4. Excessive rules and regulations - The goal of protecting client rights seems to have created excessive procedures and paperwork which compete for time with direct service.

5. Lack of administrative support/understanding - Even when the supervisor is perceived as sympathetic to staff needs he/she is sometimes seen as relatively impotent to influence the educational bureaucracy.

6. Assignments not consistent with personal interest - The generalist assignment for a staff member with a speciality interest can be a negative motivational factor.

7. No upward mobility - As pointed out by Solly and Hohensill (1980) the school psychologist is often "an entry level as well as a terminal position."

8. The mediocre and excellent school psychologist receive the same benefits - The educational system of pay scales and benefits packages promotes mediocrity by rewarding all staff members equally. The supervisor has very few tangible "perks" which can be used to reward excellence.

9. The one "bad apple" - The negative influence on an entire staff of a single burned-out obstructionist staff member can have a crippling effect on supervisor attempts as innovation.

Ideas on Motivation from the Professional Literature

Much has been written on motivational management (Blanchard & Johnson, 1982; DeFour, 1985; Fournies, 1978; Gillerman, 1968; Hill, 1984; LeBoeuf, 1985; McGregor, 1960; Peters & Waterman, 1982; Reber & Terry, 1981). A synthesis of the literature reveals many common themes. Perhaps the "Checklist of Qualities that Make a Good Boss" summarized in the November 1984 issue of Nation's Business will give the reader a good overview of supervisory characteristics which motivate employees to higher levels of productivity:

1. Provide clear direction - Group goals must be clearly set and staff involved. Delegation of responsibility must be clear.

2. Encourage open communication - Honesty and directness are key principles.

3. Coach and support - "Going to bat" for staff is a highly valued supervisory role by employees. Additionally, when a supervisor wishes to motivate a staff member to be innovative the supervisor must realize that change can produce feelings of inadequacy while new skills are uncertain. At this point, in particular, it is critical to demonstrate support and encouragement for staff efforts.

4. Provide objective recognition - Experience with modifying childrens' behavior clearly demonstrates the need of a positive to negative recognition ratio minimum of four to one to effect positive behavioral change. The supervisor must remain alert to the value of this "recognition principle" for his/her adult staff.

5. Provide feedback - The supervisor who makes the special effort to "get back" to the employee periodically on his/her progress helps ensure that employee will remain on task and motivated to accomplish identified individual goals.

6. Select the right staff - Initial staff selection is critical to a cohensive, motivated staff. Many supervisors do not have the luxury of initial selection, having inherited the majority of their staff. One goal to building staff motivation is assuring, through careful staff selection, that new employees share the goals of the supervisor and demonstrate a constructive attitude and desire to pursue excellence.

7. Financial realism - With unlimited resources, program goals can be ambitious without restraint. This situation, particularly in the educational setting, is unrealistic. Balancing realistic goals with limited resources is a critical supervisory skill necessary to assure that "staff burnout" is not the result of supervisor "over ambitiousness" in goal setting.

8. Encourage innovation - Huberman and Miles (1984) have identified factors such as staff desires for improving practice, novelty in daily work, social recognition, and professional autonomy as reasons staff are motivated to be innovative in their professional activities. Supervisors need to be alert to ways to assure these motivators are available.

9. Be a decision maker- Most employees want input in decisions but also desire supervisors who make timely clear-cut decisions. Endless debate, in the interest of staff input, can result in confusion and anxiety as well as a perception of lack of leadership.

10. Leadership integrity - Several Iowa school psychology supervisors acknowledged that, in large part, a motivated staff which works cohensively toward common goals is the product of staff respect for the honesty and integrity of the supervisor. This respect is the result of a supervisor who "talks straight" and demonstrates consistency in his relationship with staff.

DeFour (1985) describes the management principles which have worked in his high school to encourage educational excellence and have resulted in a more positive and motivated staff. These principles have equal applicability to other educational professionals such as school psychologist supervisors. The reader can readily see the overlap with desired business motivational management characteristics identified above. DuFour recommends:

1. Hold frequent brief meetings to communciate progress on common goals.
2. Replace long-standing committees with short-term goal-directed task forces.
3. Secure feedback from consumers on "how we are doing."
4. Before implementing a new idea be sure to identify a "champion" (i.e. one or more persons committed to carrying out the idea through to success).
5. Provide staff with comparative feedback on how they are performing.
6. Celebrate the success of staff members.
7. Be a visible supervisor to staff.
8. Identify the basic goals of the group and stay focused on that mission.
9. Give staff the autonomy needed to do the job well.
10. Identify core values and insist they be observed.

Considerations for Further Efforts

School psychology supervisors in Iowa have collectively acknowledged a responsibility to motivate their staffs to higher levels of performance. In addition, they report using a wide variety of motivational strategies. Much of what is presently being done appears to be consistent with recommended practice in the professional literature. So, how can school psychology supervisors be more effective staff motivators in the future? Several possibilities come to mind.

1. List motivational principles and procedures

   A. Using this chapter as a starting point, as well as a review of the chapter bibliography, the supervisor can make a list motivational principles and procedures.

   B. Categorize the list as 1) already being done, 2) not being done but a good idea and fairly easy to implement, and 3) good idea but barriers to implementation presently exist.

   C. Congratulate yourself on list one. Implement at least one procedure from list two. Identify strategies to overcome barriers for one procedure in list three and set a personal goal to implement a list three procedure by a specified time in the future.

2. Survey the school psychology staff. Identify what supervisory activities they value. Add one or more of these activities to your personal supervisory goals for the year.

3. Share ideas with supervisory peers. Make a point to compare your encouragement efforts with neighboring supervisors and try at least one new procedure this year.

4. Enlist the assistance of the special education administrator in creating a working environment which motivates staff. The ideas generated by the administration carry with them the administrative sanction to implement.

5. Lastly, keep in mind that the strongest motivator is the personal satisfaction which results from a professional accomplishment which helps ensure a child's academic or social success. The steps taken by a supervisor to help a staff member realize this goal and be recognized for his/her accomplishment will pay off many times over in the level of excellence of school psychological services.

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Traditional assumptions (Theory X) related to the management of human resources in business are contrasted with assumptions based on social science research (Theory Y). Traditional management relying on authority for direct control is shown to stifle motivation. Changes in managerial policies and practices are described which result from efforts to integrate individual and organization goals.

Reber, R. and Terry C. (1975). Behavioral Insights for Supervision. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall

Readings, cases, and exercises supplement this text to convey information on employee motivation, supervisory style, and the influence of job design on employee performance. Ideas to help supervisory personnel improve communication, foster effective group relationships, introduce change, and improve decision making are also presented.

Fournies, F. (1978). Coaching for Improved Work Performance. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co.

Face to face coaching procedures for supervisors to use with employees are presented which are designed to clearly identify specific work performance which is expected. Ineffective management concepts are contrasted with this alternative approach which first analyzes the reasons for unsatisfactory employee performance and then focuses on desire behavior change.

MacPhail-Wilcox, B. and Hyler, L. (1985). Improving the Quality of Worklife for Teachers: A Contingency Approach:. Journal of Research and Development in Education, 18, 16-24.

This article reviews important aspects of adult development and motivation literature and offers an approach for improving the quality of worklife for teachers. The approach requries that the static relationships between teachers and organizations be replaced with dynamic interdependencies.

Corbett, H. (1982). "Principals' Contribution to Maintaining Change". Phi Delta Kappan, 64, 190-192.

Reports on a study of 14 elementary and secondary schools, showing that incentives encourage teachers to continue innovative practices. Notes that principals are in the best position to provide incentives and considers the nature of incentives for both principals and teachers.

Orienting New Staff to Professional Life in the Area Education Agency

Bruce F. Jensen

AEA 2

Abstract

This chapter discusses important orientation topic which should be addressed with school psychologists who are new to an agency. Distinctions are drawn between psychologists who are new to the field and veteran psychologists who are changing agencies. Techniques for providing orientation are also discussed.

Introduction

The school psychologist who accepts new employment with an unfamiliar agency is presented with a variety of challenges which must be addressed as part of becoming a fully-functioning participant within that agency. If the school psychologist is also new to the field and is accepting a first position, there are many additional issues to be addressed concerning the nature of one's professional identity and role.

The supervisor of school psychological services can play an important part in helping to identify the issues which need to be addressed and being responsive to these issues. It can also be important to plan activities to anticipate such issues and introduce topics which the new staff member may not think to ask about or readily encounter. It is assumed that the school psychologist has completed a training program which has insured that the basic competencies and professional information have been acquired. Furthermore, it is assumed that the recruiting and assigning processes have occurred in such a way as to permit an appropriate matching of psychologists' strengths and interests to the needs and characteristics of the assignment.

Of course, it is not always possible to make ideal matches and there may be orientation and training topics pertaining to unique and particular populations of students, programs, or professional settings. As an example, it may be necessary to assign a school psychologist to a building which provides education to a large population of severely and profoundly handicapped children, or to a district in which services to preschool students is required.

In these situations it can often be helpful to call upon the expertise of other psychology department members, and professionals in other departments who are serving similar assignments and can share knowledge and provide guidance on an ongoing basis. In fact, it can sometimes be useful to establish either informal or structured, relationships among professionals who share similar, unique interests for the purpose of ongoing support and information exchange. Professionals in specialized assignments often establish these relationships out of mutual professional interest and the supervisor's role becomes one of sanctioning the expenditure of time and resources in support of interest groups. Additionally, the supervisor can direct new information to the group, utilize the individuals' expertise to help answer questions which arise, address problems, and complete projects for the entire department.

For new staff members, it becomes the supervisor's responsibility to introduce the new psychologist to special interest individuals, provide opportunities for interaction, and foster the maintenance of the relationship by providing recognition and acknowledgement for the contributions of the veteran staff members. It is also important to maintain a collection of reference materials, bibliographies, and equipment related to special assignments and which can be provided to a new school psychologist. Much of this material will have been used by the psychologist who previously served the assignment and the supervisor needs to help provide for an orderly transition of the materials and any replacement or updating which needs to be done.

Most of the orientation topics and issues which need to be dealt with do not relate to special assignments, but instead are topics which need to be addressed with all new psychologists. This chapter will attempt to identify and discuss important orientation issues. Distinctions will be drawn between the psychologist who is new to the field and the veteran school psychologist who is changing agencies. The ideas are expressed in this chapter are primarily those of the author. Some discussion was held with other school psychology supervisors in the state of Iowa and some of the ideas and practices presented in the chapter reflect the view of these supervisory colleagues.

Current Practice

Rules, Regulations and Procedures

All school psychologists should be familiar with the provisions of Public Law 94-142. However, the various states have each enacted legislation and promulgated rules and regulations which also govern the practices of special education and school psychology. Therefore, it is very important that school psychologists who are moving from another state are provided information about the state's special education system. This information needs to include discussion of due process rights, administrative and fiscal organization, and explanations of the state's terminology. Beginning school psychologists can also benefit from discussion of these issues. If possible, each staff member should have ready access to a copy of the Rules of Special Education for review and reference.

The day-to-day practice of school psychology is affected most by the procedures which each education agency has adopted in order to implement the state rules. Each psychologist should be provided with a copy of the agency's procedures manual and be expected to study it. The supervisor should also meet with new staff members to discuss the agency procedures, answer questions, provide examples, and highlight difficult or important issues. It is often useful to have these discussions within a group setting so that the participants can benefit from the questions and discussion of colleagues. When the supervisor receives individual questions at other times, it can be helpful to make a note of the issue and share the response with other new psychologists.

While it is important to address procedural issues prior to the beginning of the school year, it is also true that many procedural issues do not emerge until psychologists are actually engaged with casework. For this reason, a follow-up meeting several weeks after school has started to discuss procedures is a good idea. If the agency employs a routine monitoring or oversight system for ensuring procedural compliance, the information obtain may be utilized to identify issues which need to be addressed with particular individuals. Sample cases can be reviewed with new staff members in order to determine that procedures are being properly implemented.

Report Writing

The preparation of reports of professional psychological service deserves extra attention because of its salience within daily practice. The agency may have certain expectations concerning format which need to be fulfilled, but the individual psychologist typically enjoys much discretion concerning the style and content of reports. The beginning school psychologist may find that preparing reports is an especially difficult and time-consuming part of the professional life. This is not surprising since the report, if done well, encapsulates and reflects the very essence of the psychologist's philosophy and implementation of daily practice. For the new school psychologist, whose approach to many professional issues is still in a formative stage, the act of report writing can present a formidable challenge.

The supervisor of psychological services can assist the neophyte report writer in several ways. One of the most helpful steps can be to provide examples of reports which the supervisor feels do a good job of communicating information and fulfilling intended purposes. It is important to emphasize the purposeful nature of reports and to help the new psychologist to identify the potential consumers, purposes, and needs which the reports seeks to satisfy. The supervisor can also review the kind of information which the agency expects to be included in the report and the variety of acceptable formats which can be used. Reviewing reports and providing feedback to the new psychologist is a useful practice, not only for the psychologist, but also for the supervisor. Regularly scheduled reading of a psychologist's reports provides a "window" through which it is possible to view the scope and nature of the new school psychologist's practice.

Many beginning psychologists have had little experience with dictating equipment. The supervisor should encourage new staff members to practice with the dictaphone and to develop dictating skills and techniques which can enhance efficiency. It is not unusual for new staff people to find that the art of becoming effective with dictation can result in a transfer of verbal skills and fluency to other professional situations in which the psychologist may be asked to express opinions and convey data.

Word processing centers and secretaries who transcribe dictation can provide an orientation to their services. A clear understanding of the roles of the clerical staff and the office procedures can do much to increase the efficient use of the school psychologist's energies.

Finally, the supervisor needs to discuss stylistic concerns with school psychologists. Although report writing style is addressed during graduate training, it is important to review the topic and discuss any issues which are unique to the agency or to the local school districts and communities. In general, it is important to remind staff members to exercise appropriate caution and moderation when making interpretations, to limit discussion to topics for which data is available, and to keep in mind the potential readers and users the report may serve. It can also be helpful to review the recommendations section of the report in relationship to implications for the staffing process.

Professional Philosophy

Perhaps the most crucial task for beginning school psychologists is the development of a philosophy, or a set of beliefs, about such essential issues as child development, abnormal behavior, human relations, parenting, classroom management, and other basic theoretical issues which provide a framework for one's practice. An ongoing reexamination and reformulation of one's individual professional philosophy is also necessary for mature psychologists. Graduate professional education usually exposes school psychology students to several different approaches to dealing with substantive professional issues, with more heavy emphasis placed upon a particular theory of human behavior. For example, many school psychologists receive extensive training in applying the techniques of behavior modification. Implicit in the acquisition of this training are a set of assumptions about the relationships between organisms and environments and the admissibility of constructs and practices which are not consistent with a logical-positivistic world view. Other school psychologists may have been more heavily influenced by cognitive-developmental models, or by psychodynamic constructs and theories.

For the new psychologist it becomes quickly imperative to organize one's thoughts about these basic theoretical issues in order to make sense, and impose order, on the wide array of complicated cases, problems, and situations which are encountered as part of daily practice. Although one may have felt competent in one's theoretical underpinnings when in graduate school, it is not uncommon for new psychologists to feel a bit more theoretically tentative when encountering a diversity of opinions among colleagues, and the burden of being individually responsible for decisions and plans which affect the lives of children.

In this context, the supervisor, as well as other colleagues, can play an important role in helping the new psychologist process the issues and formulate an individual theory, or set of beliefs and techniques. Seminar-type activities may be organized for purposes of discussion and reference works of a case-study design are useful. Perhaps the most useful activity occurs when the new psychologist and supervisor can engage in actual case consultation while the case is in progress. With experience and the opportunity to review the outcome of professional casework, the new psychologist can come to evaluate the efficacy of different approaches with different clients and arrive at a comfortable, but not overly dogmatic, philosophy of practice.

Budgeting Time and Scheduling

The topic of efficient time management is especially important for the beginning school psychologist. From a desire to make good first impressions and out of zeal for the new position, it is possible for the new staff person to overextend himself/herself and make too many commitments. It is also possible to begin work on too many new cases without achieving closure or fully meeting responsibilities with existing casework. Conversely, some new school psychologists become concerned that every case should be exhaustively concluded before beginning work on new activities. The supervisor needs to help the new staff members allocate their time and build schedules that are responsive to the needs of the schools but still achieve a balance with other agency responsibilities. Monitoring of timelines and caseloads during the first few months can be helpful in avoiding situations where a new psychologist can quickly become far behind in meeting obligations. It is important for the supervisor to clarify the agency's expectations in regard to workload and be supportive of the psychologist's need to have office time for the completion of reports and other paperwork. This support is important not only as it relates to school administrators and agency personnel, but also as it relates to the psychologist. Some staff members need to be persuaded of the value of nondirect service and assured of the importance with which the supervisor views it.

When budgeting time it is also important to acknowledge the various roles the new psychologist is expected to perform. If the supervisor values much consultation activity, occasional applied research efforts, or periodic inservice presentations, it is necessary for the psychologist's schedule to reflect the time and opportunity to pursue these roles.

Teaming With Other Professionals

Most training programs do not typically devote much attention to the roles and functions of other related support services, such as speech and language clinicians or social workers. New school psychologists therefore often know little about the work of other professionals. There is also variance in professional roles and responsibilities among different agencies and the school psychologist who is transferring employment may also need an orientation to the roles related to support services in the new agency. The supervisor can begin this orientation process by providing descriptions and examples of the work done by other departments. The supervisors of the other departments should be introduced to the new psychologist and they should be encouraged to approach the other supervisors with questions and issues which are appropriate to the various departments.

A technique which has often been effective has been to introduce a new psychologist to the team members who serve the same school assignment and allow them to provide much of the orientation to the personnel and procedures of the local district.

In addition to information about related services, it is also essential to communicate an attitude of mutual respect and sense of value for the work of other departments. Perhaps the most important thing which a supervisor can do to help ensure harmonious and productive relationships with other departments is to model good teamwork as part of the supervisory responsibilities.

Involvement with Local Schools

Each local school district, and in many cases attendance center, represents a unique set of circumstances reflecting the personalities, history, and culture of the setting. The supervisor is usually a veteran with the agency and can be a valuable resource in helping the school psychologist appreciate the environment in which she/he is working. It is important to also develop an understanding of the larger community, social structures, and economic factors which impact the school system.

In addition to sharing factual knowledge about the community and school district, the supervisor should alert the new psychologist to certain general principles concerning relationships with local districts. Issues which can be discussed in a seminar-like format include identifying the catalytic, influential professionals within a system and working with them to gain entry to the system, developing personal rapport with teachers within the bounds of a professional relationship, and balancing the sometimes conflicting needs and demands of several attendance centers. These issues are only examples of the many psychologist-local district topics which can be profitably discussed. The supervisor can initiate discussion of these items in anticipation of the issues and thereby help the new psychologist avoid potential difficulties.

Evaluation of School Psychology Services

Most master contracts require, and good practice also dictates, that new employees be informed of the staff evaluation practices and instruments which will be utilized. This information should be supplied at the beginning of the school year. In addition to the standard evaluation items, it is often also useful for the supervisor and new staff member to agree upon certain goals and job target for the year. Some of these goals may be suggested by the supervisor and some by the employee. If used, the goals should be in written form with a clear understanding that there will be an accounting of the goal accomplishment at the conclusion of the school year.

The meeting to discuss the evaluation content and format is an extremely important one. This meeting does no less than define the role and philosophy of the evaluation for the individual practitioner. It represents an opportunity for the supervisor to make clear the expectations for the kinds and extent of activities to be performed. Dealt with in an open and straightforward manner, a discussion of these topics can also build good professional relationships between staff members and supervisor.

Agency Procedures of a Nonprofessional Nature

At some point during the orientation process it will be necessary to provide information about a number of agency policies and procedures of a nonprofessional nature. The new employee will need to learn about such issues as filing claims for reimbursement of travel expenses, using sick leave, ordering professional materials, utilizing insurance benefits, and a number of topics which are not specific to school psychology. The school psychology supervisor may not need to personally provide this aspect of orientation, but it is important that the information is conveyed to the new employee in some

manner. The agency's business office may provide brochures which cover many of these items. A new psychologist has many tasks which demand attention and few of the tasks, because of their novelty, can be done routinely. Because a new psychologist must devote so much attention and care to so many new and challenging professional issues, it can be very helpful to have procedures and information in place to streamline and expedite nonprofessional matters. To do so allows a very real conservation of the psychologist's energy and resources.

Role of the Supervisor in Relationship to the School Psychology Staff

During orientation and the first few weeks of employment, it is important to clarify the supervisor's role to the new psychologist. This clarification can be done through explanation and by acting-out the desired role during the early stages of the developing relationship with the new staff member. The supervisor operates in a dual capacity as a program administrator and evaluator of staff and also as a case consultant and sometime mentor for new psychologists. Because of potential conflict between these two roles, beginning psychologists may be somewhat hesitant about asking for assistance and thereby feeling as though they are exposing weaknesses which could be used during staff evaluation.

The supervisor need to frankly acknowledge some of these inherent conflicts in the supervisor-staff relationship and insure the staff person that seeking assistance in order to improve performance and remedy possible problems is much preferred to leaving problems unsolved. Being clear about the purposes and procedures for evaluation is also important in this regard.

Supervisors should encourage case consultation interactions with new, inexperienced psychologists. However, the case consultation should be provided in a way that fosters increased independence and less need to consult about similar issues in the future. Such techniques as brainstorming solutions and using a question-oriented approach to referral concerns can help model an approach to professional issues which can be transferred to subsequent situations.

The early weeks of the supervisor-psychologist relationship help set the tone for later rapport. Modes of communication are established and the tone and style of the relationship develop. The supervisor typically has had a background of relationships with many other psychologists and has the advantage of being able to incorporate the unique aspects of the new relationship with the beginning psychologist into this relationship style. The beginning psychologist may not have much experiential background to draw upon, and the supervisor may need to take special steps to initiate contact to promote the desired relationship. It can be important to the new psychologist to have opportunities to observe and be aware of the supervisor's interactions with veteran members as a model for their own interactions.

Summary and Implications

At some point following the orientation program, it is important to evaluate the outcome of the efforts. The ultimate outcome variables involve the collection of data and observations of performances which reflect the psychologists' actual on-the-job behavior. However, it can also be valuable to meet with new employees at several points during the school year to discuss the orientation process and to identify any additional areas which still need attention. The identification of such issues can then be used to help plan future orientation programs.

The above discussion of orientation topics is not intended to be exhaustive, or to even include all of the topics which could be important to address with new staff members. The practice of school psychologist is a complicated process which blends scientific understandings, technical skills, and artful human relations. The beginning school psychologist, who is also often a young adult, is in need of guidance and models for professional practice. While much of this modeling can occur as a result of exposure to daily events, it is usually helpful to process this daily experience with another professional and by discussing it come to some new and enhanced understanding of the experience. Perhaps no supervisory role is as professionally satisfying as helping to induct new school psychologists into the profession.

Program Research, Development and Review in School Psychology

Joe Ulman

AEA 3

Abstract

This chapter describes issues involved in program research, development and review. Information is presented which indicates how the timely collection of the right data can assist in goal attainment. A model through which program activities can be evaluated is reviewed and the results of a survey of program evaluation activities in the state of Iowa are described.

Introduction

> A man once planned to travel to a distant country. Being a prudent man, he spent a great deal of time studying about the country he was about to visit. He learned, for example, how the people would dress, the language they would speak and the customs they would observe. The unfortunate thing about about this man however was that despite his vast knowledge base, he never reached his destination. You see, although he learned much about his goal, he never bothered to plan his trip. Eventually he arrived at a destination, but it was not where he had originally hoped to be.

Silly? Certainly. Unusual? Not at all. Most of us know a great deal about our goals. We would have little trouble describing how we would like things to be. Unfortunately, we spend very little time (not unlike our colleague in the story) gathering information about how to proceed toward those goals. Because of this we, also, often find ourselves in a location not at all to our liking.

This chapter describes issues involved in program research, development and review (or to aid in readability, Program R^2 and D). Information is presented which indicates how the timely collection of the right data can assist in goal attainment. A model through which program activities can be evaluated is reviewed and the results of a survey of program evaluation efforts within the School Psychology Departments in the state of Iowa are described.

What Program Research, Development and Review is - and is Not

Program ^{2} and D are steps which are focused both upon a program's progress as well as its outcomes. No undertaking can be totally accepted or rejected on the basis of a single summative evaluation study "...any more than a scientific theory can be proven or disproven on the basis of a single experiment" (Senf and Anderson, 1974).

Program R^2 and D IS NOT a form of staff evaluation. Although information which is gathered to judge the efficacy of a school psychology department is often tied to specific activities of individual psychologists, its intent is not to determine the value of the staff member but rather to determine the worth of the program itself.

Why Collect Data for Program Research Development and Review?

As alluded to by the story about the traveler, the most pervasive argument for systematic program research and development is in its ability to track the progress of a school psychology department as it strives to provide quality services.

Five broad areas exist in most programs which lend themselves to data-based decision-making.

a. Goal Development. Through the judicious use of data collection, new areas for service delivery can be identified and developed.

b. Goal Modification. Through the use of Program R^2 & D, information regarding process toward goals can be measured. Further, the necessity to make modifications in either service delivery or the goals themselves can be determined.

c. Goal Attainment. Through program research and review, a mechanism is provided for determining when goals are achieved.

d. Accountability. As providers of a highly specialized service, school psychology departments have a responsibility to constantly evaluate the effectiveness of their services and to communicate the results of that research to their consumers.

e. Public Relations. Through the results of program research, various consumer groups (newspapers, local school boards, AEA boards, parents, etc.) can be informed of the services being provided.

A second reason why it is important to conduct program R^2 and D is that it is included within standards of professional practice (e.g., American Psychological Association and National Association of School Psychologists). School psychologists are expected to evaluate their own services and to monitor the effects of treatment/intervention/counseling plans. As no case work can occur outside the system in which it is delivered, programmatic research would seem a reasonable and logical extension of the case specific, ethical requirements.

Lastly, all programs which are funded through governmental agencies are under significant financial pressures. Certainly, school psychology departments are not immune to those pressures and need to be able to respond to accountability questions in a reasoned and data-based manner.

Fairchild (1983) provides a useful model through which current practice in program research, development and review can be examined. The model identifies dimensions which should be considered when dealing with the topics of program R^2 and D including: a) consumers of the service b) the types of services which are delivered and c) measurement of effectiveness.

Consumers. In conducting effective program research, a wide variety of consumers of school psychological services need to be considered. Students, teachers, administrators, parents and professionals in related agencies all represent potential sources of information.

Services. Just as there is great diversity in the consumers of School Psychological Services, there is likewise a multiformity of services provided those consumers. Consultation, evaluations, inservice programs, counseling and communication (written and oral) represent only a part of the wide range of activities performed by most school psychologists. Individuals interested in developing effective information gathering systems pointed at developing a data base for program research need to consider these factors.

Measurement. Because of the numerous consumer groups and wide variety of services, no single method of data collection can effectively measure all situations. Three different approaches are described by Fairchild (1983); enumeration, process and outcome.

> Enumeration data refers to that data which is collected in order to count the number of occurrences of a given activity. Frequently, enumeration data is collected through tabulation on a weekly, monthly, or yearly basis. Its focus is quantitative and the data collected are easily computerized, both in collection and analysis.
>
> Process information focuses upon qualitative issues. Unlike enumeration data where information is collected through occurrence logs, process data collection typically depends upon surveys and questionnaires. Its purpose is to obtain feedback from various consumer groups.
>
> The final type of effectiveness measure is outcome data. Outcome data attempts to determine the match between the goals of the department and actual performance.

Although the distinction between types is useful for discussion, the three types of measurement should not be seen as discrete. Any service which is performed by school psychologists might be measured in more than one fashion. For example, a supervisor of school psychological services might collect daily logs from the staff in order to determine the number of consultation activities which were conducted (enumeration data). At the same time, a survey might be undertaken to learn of teacher's perceptions regarding the usefulness of that consultation (process data). Likewise, the supervisor of school psychological services might also gather child change information to measure the overall effectiveness of recommendations stemming from behavioral consultation across the entire AEA (outcome data).

Current Practice

In order to assess the current practice of program research, development and review within Iowa's 15 Area Education Agencies, a survey was conducted with the Supervisor's of School Psychological Services during the spring of 1986 (see Appendix A). Surveys were returned by 10 of the 15 supervisors. To facilitate interpretation, analysis of the survey results is divided on the basis of Fairchild's data types (enumeration, process or outcome).

Enumeration Data

Enumeration data (logs in which individual case work was recorded) were collected on at least an annual basis by all of the supervisors responding to the survey. As can be seen in Table #1, the most frequently cited use for that information was to complete the Department of Public Instruction End of Year Report (10 of 10). The next most frequent use for the enumeration data was as a data base to be used for Public Relations/Accountability data with local school personnel. Enumeration data was identified as being used to help in planning staff development and making staff assignments in three AEAs. Data obtained through quantitative logs were used for program development in one AEA.

TABLE #1
USE OF ENUMERATION DATA

Types of Use	AEAs (N=10)
Year End Report	10
Public Relations/Accountability	6
Staff Assignments	3
Staff Development	3
Program Development	1

PROCESS DATA

In the area of systematic collection of process data, five of the supervisors of school psychological services indicated formal surveys of consumer groups were undertaken within their AEAs. In those locations, Table #2 indicates the frequency with which various consumer groups were targeted as the recipient of surveys.

TABLE #2
CONSUMER GROUPS SURVEYED

Consumer group	Frequency (N=5)
LEA Administration	5
LEA Teachers	3
Parents	3
Other Human Service Agency Staff	2
Other AEA Staff	2

Of the five Supervisors who indicated on their survey that they collected process data, all included local school administration in their consumer questionnaires. Other consumers of school psychological services were less often queried. Table #3 shows the uses made of the consumer survey results.

TABLE #3
USE OF PROCESS DATA

Types of Use	Number of AEAs Responding (N=5)
Public Relations/Accountability	3
Staff Development	3
Program Development	3

Use of the data resulting from process surveys was found to split evenly between the three categories listed.

OUTCOME DATA

The results of the supervisor's survey in the area of data collection to determine progress toward department goals (outcome data), is shown in Table #4.

TABLE #4
USE OF OUTCOME DATA

Types of Use	AEAs (N=10)
Year End Report	10
Staff Development	3
Program Development	0

As can be seen, all ten respondents indicated that data was collected on an individual child basis regarding the effectiveness of individual interventions. This data was collected primarily for the Department of Public Instruction's End of Year report. A secondary use for child change data collection was in the area of staff development. Three of the supervisors indicated they utilize student outcome data during meetings with individual staff members in order to assist in professional growth activities. Data regarding the effectiveness of individual interventions was not reported as being used on an department wide basis for program development.

Some AEAs included outcome data collection procedures within their school psychology department goals. For example, the school psychology department goals. For example, the school psychology department within AEA 3 included a goal which stated:

> By June 15, 1987, specific information will be gathered regarding the success of psychological intervention plans in aiding behavior changes for students within AEA 3 who have received such services..."

Measurement of that goal is accomplished through the collection of child change data by each school psychologist and provided to the supervisor of school psychological services.

Significantly, virtually every respondent indicated an awareness of the importance that program research, development and review should play in the role and function of their department. When given the opportunity to indicate their perceptions of "the priority program research, development and review should have in the AEAs as related to the priority it is given," one supervisor indicated "...(program research, development and review)... should have a higher priority but because of the significance of staff time and assignment issues, it has never obtained the status it required." Responding to the same question, another supervisor indicated "...(there)...never seems to be time...(although)...I firmly believe in the value of well designed feedback efforts." A third supervisor stated, "It seems apparent that failure to conduct program R & D eventually leads to chaotic, haphazard evolution — not necessarily growth."

Discussion of Survey Results

When viewed in total, the results of the survey of school psychology supervisors regarding Program Research, Development and Review suggests the following.

1. It would appear that the greatest amount of energy is being spent collecting enumeration data. Major motivations for this data collection, aside from information required by the Department of Public Instruction, appear to be related to public relations and accountability issues.

2. The process data collection that is being done also appears to be tied closely to accountability and public relations efforts. Consumer surveys were found to typically query local school administrators. Only limited use was being made of the data in longitudinal efforts for program development.

3. Through review of departmental goals, it was evident that planning and development were taking place in the school psychology departments within the AEAs of Iowa. From the results of this survey, however, it was not possible to ascertain the data base on which either past goals were evaluated or on which new goals were based.

4. There appears to be a need to develop more systematic and comprehensive methodologies for program research, development and review which reflect the diversity of consumers and services involved in the delivery of school psychological services.

Data Collection Design

How might a systematic and comprehensive model of program R^2 and D appear? Figure #1 depicts a system for gathering such information on a program-wide basis.

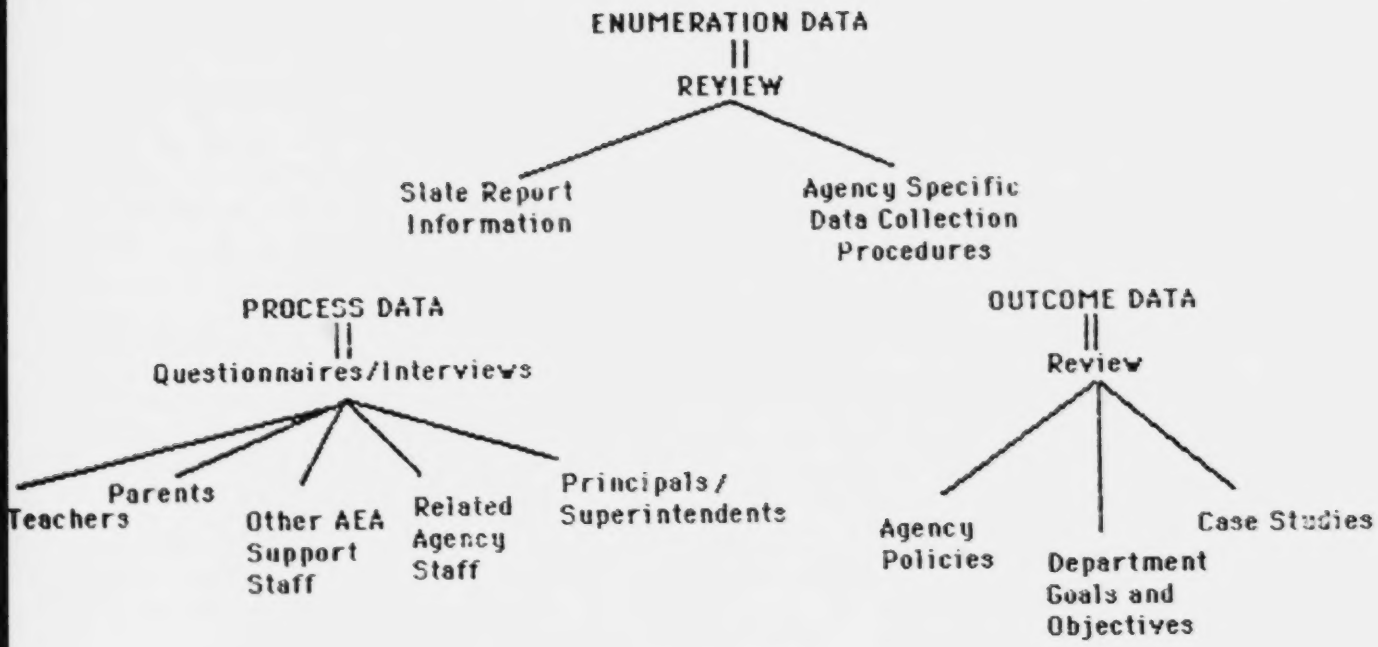

Figure 1

In this model, all three types of data are collected. Enumeration and outcome data are gained thr ugh the analysis of existing data sets (such as State report information, departmental goals and objectives and case file reviews). Process data would be gathered through questionnaires and interviews with a wide variety of consumer groups. Although a review of specific data collection instruments which could be used in such a comprehensive system is outside the intent of this chapter, sources which provide examples are referenced in the annotated bibliography.

The purpose of such a comprehensive syste: of data collection would be to provide information to evaluate all of the various functions of a program including:

a. Goal Development. Through analys.s of process and outcome data, consumer needs and effective strategies can be identified and translated into department goals.

b. Goal Modification. Enumeration data, information from consumer questionnaires as well as outcome data from case reviews offer the basis for goal modification.

c. Goal Attainment. Typically, evaluation criteria for departmental goals require data collection of the types included in this model to determine goal attainment.

d. Accountability/Public Relations. Although collected for program evaluation purposes, the data obtained through this methodology provides a broad base on which to build accountability and public relations efforts.

Future Directions

It is clear from the results of the brief survey included in this chapter that further refinement in the area of program R^2 and D is warranted. However a number of factors are noted from which growth might be anticipated. First, the supervisors who responded to the survey are uniformly supportive of the importance and purpose of such activities. Secondly, a number of data collection procedures are currently being completed in the AEAs to collect information about some aspects of the overall school psychology programs. Rather than starting from scratch, it appears that utilizing the results of those efforts for program development rather than solely for PR/accountability can provide a significant data base from which to start. Third, each AEA has a set of goals and objectives for their school psychology department which could provide a basis for research and review. In most locations the targets are clear, but there is an apparent need to bring data to bear on how well the department is proceeding towards those goals. Finally, all the AEAs in the state have within their school psychology departments, trained professionals with the skills to conduct meaningful research and to transform the data collected from those activities into useful ideas for program modifications.

The question then becomes, where to start? The next sections will look at practical ideas related to each of the three activities - program research, development and review.

Program Research

When viewed in the context of the data collection model provided by Fairchild (1983) the future of program R^2 and D would appear to include a shift of emphasis away from the collection of purely quantitative information toward focusing upon the more qualitative aspects of School Psychology programs. In order to accomplish that research, systematic feedback from the full range of consumers needs to be undertaken. Additionally, outcome data regarding the program's progress towards its goals and objectives also needs to be addressed.

Program Development

In the future, there will be more energy focused upon the use of the various data which will be collected. Programmatic decision-making will be based on pertinent information.

Program Review

In regards to effective program review, consider the following example taken from individual case work in the practice of school psychology. The most effective psychologist conducts purposeful data collection. Purposeful in this context refers to the linkage between the types of information collected and the use which will be made of the information once it is gathered. In case work, the linkage refers to the act of considering all of the possible information which could be collected and determining which data would be the most potent in its ability to answer questions about the client (and ultimately be the most effective in assisting in the client's growth).

To apply that analogy to school psychology departments, the issue of purposefulness pertains to the bridge between program research (type of data collected and methodology) and the manner in which those activities relate to program development. In order to be purposeful, all data collection must be designed to answer questions related to the program under review. Also inherent in the concept of purposefulness is that the potential uses of a given set of data are determined prior to the collection of the information. Too often, data collection systems are developed for one purpose and then maintained after that activity is accomplished. As data continues to accumulate, other uses of the information are developed which may either be outside the goals of the department, or which may not be effectively addressed by the "available" data set. Although the applications of data outside their intended purpose does not always develop flawed conclusions, the effectiveness of such program R^2 and D frequently is greatly lessened.

Summary and Implications

If we are to effectively monitor the progress of the school psychology departments with which we work, we must be involved in well designed and comprehensive program R^2 and D. We need to develop department goals in such a manner as to be reflective of the purposes for which work. We need to develop measurement procedures which provide meaningful feedback as we proceed towards our goals and we need to be responsive in program planning to the information which is developed through that program research. Lastly, we need to share the results of our efforts with the consumers of our services so they are able to make informed decisions regarding our effectiveness. In that manner, unlike the hapless traveler described earlier, we will be well informed about both the progress we are making towards our objectives as well as the meaningfulness of our goals.

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Annotated Bibliography

Accountability for School Psychologists: Selected Readings.
Edited by T. N. Fairchild in 1977, this book provides a excellent source for information regarding program evaluation and accountability. Numerous practice examples of accountability efforts as well as survey forms for teacher and parent feedback are included. Available from University Press of America, Washington, DC.

Best Practices in School Psychology.
This 1985 publication of the National Association of School Psychologists (ed. by Alex Thomas and Jeff Grimes) contains two chapters which provide valuable insights into program R^2 and D. The first, Best Practices in Evaluating Educational Programs by Charles A. Maher and Louis J. Kruger offers a useful discussion of key issues which should be addressed when considering program evaluation. Best Practices for Improving School Psychology through Accountability by Joseph E. Zins provides an excellent review of the rationale and methodologies involved in collecting accountability data.

Accountability for School Psychologists: Developing Trends.
This booklet (available through NASP Publications, 10 Overland Drive, Stratford, CT. 06497) was developed by Joseph E. Zins and Jeff Grimes in 1982. It provides an excellent resource for examples of instruments which have been used for program evaluation.

APPENDIX A

DATA MANAGEMENT FOR PROGRAM RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

I. What types of data do you collect?

A. Information regarding activities by the psychologist with individual students. YES NO

1. Do you collect data beyond that which is required by the School Psychologist End-of-the-Year Report? YES NO

   If YES, please indicate on the tape what types of additional individual student data you collect.

2. How often do you collect end-of-the year-type individual student data from the psychologists on staff?

   Continuously, by case ____

   Monthly ____

   Semi-annually ____

   Annually ____

3. Please indicate on the tape how you use individual student date once it is collected.

   FOR EXAMPLE:

   .....Staff development

   .....Accountability with local schools the public, AEA Administration, etc.

   .....Public Relations

   .....Program Development

DATA MANAGEMENT, cont.

B. Other activities by the psychologist...

1. Do you collect information from individual psychologists regarding non-case activities (beyond that which is required on the End-of-the-Year Report)? YES NO

(AN EXAMPLE would be a time analysis of how the psychologists spend their day.)

If YES, please indicate on the tape the types of non-child specific information you collect.

2. How often do you collect non-child specific, end-of-the-year information from the psychologists on staff?

Continuously by occurrence____

Monthly ____

Semi-annually ____

Annually ____

3. Please indicate on the tape how you will use this type of information once it is collected.

.....Staff development

.....Accountability with local schools the public, AEA Administration, etc.

.....Public Relations

.....Program Development

C. Consumer feedback.

1. From what consumer groups do you collect feedback?

.....Local school administration ____

.....Local school teachers ____

.....Parents ____

.....Students ____

.....Other human service agencies____

.....Other AEA personnel ____

DATA MANAGEMENT, cont.

2. ON TAPE, please indicate:

....How you collect the data for each group you indicated in #1.

....What use you make of the data which is collected.

FOR EXAMPLE:

.....Staff development

.....Accountability with local schools, the public, AEA Administration, etc.

.....Public Relations

.....Program Development

II. IN NARRATIVE FORM, please indicate on the tape recorder.....

.....your perceptions of the priority program research development and review should have in the AEAs as related to the priority it is given.

.....The importance this area is actually given

.....Future directions you anticipate in the area of Program R & D

.....Anything else you see as important to review in the upcoming chapter

THANKS FOR THE HELP!!

Individualized Growth of Professionals

Ed Smith

AEA 4

Abstract

The breadth and complexity of the school psychology profession requires continual study to maintain, develop, and upgrade skills and knowledge. This chapter explores the roadblocks to this continuous professional growth and the activities that supervisors may engage in to overcome them. Suggestions for future action are given.

Introduction

School psychology has come to be recognized as one of the primary fields in the area of professional psychology. Having its roots in several other major fields, including clinical, developmental, and educational psychology, school psychology has firmly established its own identity, training programs, professional organizations and literature.

Academic psychologists usually live in "Meccas" of intellectual stimulation. Most professional psychologists serving in mental health settings have a variety of colleagues immediately available, including other psychologists as well as other mental health professionals. Teaming procedures in mental health clinic settings facilitate interaction with other professionals with similar concerns and orientations.

School psychologists, even those who work within large service units, often find themselves much more isolated than colleagues in other psychological specialty areas. Unless they are working with large school districts where the population density of students allows many psychologists to work out of the same office, they are usually scattered over a wide area, in a number of different agency branch offices. If an individual psychologist is fortunate, he or she may be located with up to a half-dozen other psychologists. Often one is more isolated than this. When a psychologist is separated from colleagues, it is difficult to obtain both the support and challenge that comes from one's peers.

Like all areas of psychology, the specialty field of school psychology is a dynamic profession based on an ever-increasing, research-oriented, data base. New knowledge and new skills are continually being developed. Political forces affecting both general and special education are constantly shaping the roles of psychologists who practice in schools. At the same time, new research in education and the subsequent changes in the structure of schools and the process of teaching have profound effects on school psychology. The interacting forces of professional isolation and the continual change of school psychology and the school environment make sustained professional growth difficult, yet essential. This chapter examines the current issues in professional growth for school psychologists in Iowa and looks at some of the ways in which Area Education Agency (AEA) school psychology supervisors are dealing with this issue.

The role of the school psychologist is so varied and diversified that it is difficult to master even the "basics" of the professional field. The role is also dynamic and changing, and the knowledge base is increasing at an almost frightening rate for the average practitioner. In our efforts to provide psychological services in the schools, we are constantly reminded of how little we really know as individuals about children, the complexities of their behavior, and the processes of teaching and learning. The ever-present gap that we see between our knowledge and skills and those we perceive necessary for effectiveness can be a source of stress, frustration, and personal dissatisfaction.

However, this same role complexity is also one of the major positive attributes of the field of school psychology. One can focus his or her interest on various topics from time to time to develop special areas of expertise. There is a wide variety of issues and subjects that can hook this interest, and one need never be bored. School psychologists who follow this path may feel more competent, and experience more job satisfaction, than those who do not.

Self-directed professional growth requires time, energy, and money. Each of these personal costs serve to inhibit the process of learning and skill development. School psychology can be a very stressful field because of caseloads, conflicting values and professional demands, and professional isolation. There is little time for professional reading and study during the working week, and even less available for actual skill development. These forces of professional inertia are sometimes overwhelming to both practitioners and their supervisors.

Current Practice

The need for continuous learning and growth is recognized as a problem for all professions and has been a focus of discussion within the field of school psychology (Ross-Reynold and Grimes, 1981). In fact, one could argue that the most important role that the supervisor of school psychology plays in the area education agency is that of teacher, mentor, and catalyst for change and growth. From this perspective, a disconcerting trend in Iowa is the elimination of discipline-specific supervisory positions. This appears to be primarily motivated by the pressures for budget reduction and the cocommitant reduction of professional staff. AEA 13 does not have even a part-time supervisor for psychological services. AEA 11, the largest in the state with over 40 full-time psychologists, left its supervisor position open for a full academic year. Other agencies such as AEA 12 are combining discipline-specific supervisory positions with other administrative functions, often requiring the person to have endorsement as a special education director. Whether this latter practice might potentially exclude some of the most effective school psychology supervisors is not even being examined.

The results of one alarming study suggests that teachers "peak out" after five to seven years of teaching. The passage of time seems to diminish their capacity for change and dampen their enthusiasm for learning (Halsteed, 1980). If a similar process functions for school psychologists, an early and intensive program of encouraging professional growth seems imperative. But, it is difficult to provide a meaningful program for professional growth within a discipline unless there is a member of that discipline responsible for the activity. Only a member of a given professional discipline can understand the field and its issues well enough to provide this type of leadership.

Fortunately, school psychologists have many more opportunities for stimulating inservice activities than do teachers. Teachers are rarely allowed more than one or two days away from their classes each year for workshops and other inservice activities. Even within the school, teachers are often professionally isolated, having few structured opportunities for meaningful interactions with other teachers. Psychologists have not only more opportunity to engage in learning activities, they have much more support and encouragement.

We regularly develop behavioral goals for students; behavioral goals can be similarly set up as easily for school psychologists. School psychologists are likely to take goals written for them much more seriously than children do. Interestingly, there is frequently little application of psychological principles to the supervision of school psychologists. Psychologists tend to be independent and would be highly resentful of direct manipulation of their behavior. Also, psychologists can give very conflicting messages about what they expect from their supervisors. As a group, school psychologists tend to hate to admit that they are not experts and do not know everything. They are intelligent, articulate, and usually well-read. However, knowledge in itself is not self-actualizing, and psychologists need help in implementing new skills as much as anyone else. Not all methods of influencing behavior are intrusive, and there are many effective activities that supervisors are using to encourage professional growth.

Enabling Access to Literature

Independent study will always be a primary factor in professional growth. All psychologists can have access to current professional literature through a variety of resources. Professional libraries should have available all the basic books within the field of school psychology. Books may not be "locally" available from the AEA but almost any book can be obtained through interlibrary loan.

The distribution of journal articles by supervisors is a major source of references for many psychologists in the state of Iowa. One supervisor maintains a separate professional library for psychologists, regularly disseminates the listing, and encourages requests for book purchases.

Several supervisors include goals for professional reading in their staff evaluation process. Many supervisors actively solicit submission of articles that psychologists have found to share with the entire staff. Some ask for reviews of these in staff meetings, and at least one AEA includes written reviews in its own discipline newsletter.

Growth Contracts

There are a variety of techniques related to management by objectives. One of these is the writing of "growth contracts" which includes statements of specific objectives for the year, a description of the means to reach the goals, and a specification of any financial resources that will be required (Garvin, 1986).

While almost any kind of activity can encourage professional growth, group attempts have the least impact (Jordan, Personal Communication). The necessity for personal contact and involvement by the supervisor was noted by several supervisors. This supports the argument that a supervisor is an essential part of a good program of psychological services.

Future Directions

There are some "built-in" reinforcers that encourage growth within the school psychology profession. Requirements for continuing education credits to renew state licenses in psychology are a major source of motivation for attendance at workshops and inservices. However, the dual certification/licensure system for school psychologists in Iowa exempts certified school psychologists from having to be licensed. Without a state license, the requirement for annual continuing education units has no impact on an individual.

A number of factors discourage continued professional growth. School psychologists begin their professional careers with a minimum of a 60 graduate semester hours master's degree, and they may quickly attain permanent professional certification. Once one obtains the Iowa Permanent Professional Certificate there is little financial or organizational pressure to continue taking university courses. Rules revisions for certification will no longer allow permanent certification that allows this type of stagnation. Sometimes the design or the policies of professional psychology training programs in university settings can prohibit a practitioner from taking graduate psychology classes in the evenings at all. The author lived fifteen miles from Iowa State University for fourteen years, yet was unable to find more than a few graduate level professional psychology courses that were offered in the evening. Doctoral programs are out of the question at all for practitioners unless one either takes a leave of absence (assuming that one can bear the financial burden of a year's leave), resigns one's position, or both works and studies full time.

It may be either necessary or desirable to rely on universities as a major vehicle for continued professional growth. Continuing education in the legal profession, for example, is almost totally independent of the university training programs and takes place in institutes sponsored by legal professional organizations (Killian, 1980). Hopefully, our professional organizations are more responsive to our needs than are universities.

Probably the most powerful force working to encourage professional growth in school psychology is not required continuing education, but the ever-evolving role of psychologists within the field of education. There are several current trends in school psychology in Iowa that are, or likely will, shape the very nature of school psychology within the state. These trends bring with them strong implications for possible role changes. School psychologists must anticipate and prepare for organizational changes that impact on the need for their services or they will be poorly prepared for meeting the challenges of the future.

There are many possible changes in special education evaluation and placement procedures that could minimize the need for the assessment activities that school psychologists provide. A reexamination of the efficacy of special education programs has revealed little research evidence to support the current categorical labeling practices or the resource model of education for mildly handicapped students (Ysseldyke, 1983). As a result, the federal government is engaged in research with alternative delivery systems that may not include the need for current assessment methods. The Iowa Department of Education is also encouraging the development of research projects that explore alternatives to resource teaching programs.

There is an increasing focus holding school psychologists accountable for their activities. Some of this is external, but most comes from within the profession as it strives to prove its effectiveness within the schools. This emphasis will serve to more clearly identify what school psychological services are most helpful to schools and to handicapped children. Even direct services to children and their families are beginning to be evaluated for effectiveness as part of the process of evaluating individual education plans.

There is a growth of other professional disciplines within special education that have roles overlapping with those of school psychologists. Social workers who provide direct service to children and families and who can provide effective behaviorial consultation are carrying our activities that are not only visible, but which result in child changes that are valued by schools. There is a cadre of well-trained and effective school social workers providing these services in Iowa. This is in direct contrast to many school psychologists who provide primarily "diagnostic" services which are often directed at legal identification and categorical labeling but not prescriptive interventions and individual educational plans.

Some training institutions such as Drake University are beginning to provide educational activities, both preservice and inservice, to school counselors so that they can provide meaningful and effective support services to handicapped children. As school counselors increase their knowledge of handicapped children and their involvement with them, they may eventually take over some of the activities now provided by school psychologists. Part of Iowa's long-term plan for improving school effectiveness includes increasing the available support services such as school counselors; school psychologists are not mentioned in this plan.

Educational consultants with backgrounds in behavioral interventions and consultation methodologies may be able to design, implement, and manage classroom-based interventions and provide effective services within both general education and behaviorially disordered classrooms. One unique aspect of psychology is that the discipline is always "sold" to others. The most pragmatic and useful knowledge from the area of psychological research is borrowed by other disciplines and effectively implemented into their training programs. When psychologists do not "keep up" with the current application of technology in their own field, other disciplines will be quick to move in and fill the gap.

Professional growth involves far more than simply keeping up with the literature. Although reading and study are an essential part of professional growth, knowledge in itself does not necessarily lead to actual implementation. This is as true for school psychologists as it is for other disciplines. Knowing "about" and knowing "how" are not at all synonomous. It is much more difficult to get school psychologists to engage in new practices than to get them to develop knowledge about the new practices. A good example of this is the extensive literature available now regarding social competence and social skills. Most practicing psychologists have been exposed to extensive courage of these topics in the literature, and many have attended workshops in social skills training and related topics, but relatively few school psychologists are actively involved in either direct intervention efforts or in the design of classroom programs to facilitate social skills development in handicapped children. There is also little systematic assessment of social perception and skills with students who are very likely to have social skill problems. This is true even though adequate social skills are seen as primary prerequisites for successful mainstreaming and later vocational success.

School psychologists are most likely to engage in new experiences when they receive ongoing, guided supervision and/or consultation in the activities, or share the activity with another psychologist or person from a related discipline. Learning about and engaging in new skills involves taking risk. When failure can be minimized, or where it can be shared (and thus is less threatening), the new experiences become positive growth experiences.

How can these learning activities be encouraged when psychologists are professionally isolated? Where there is little opportunity to learn background knowledge except by independent study? Where there are few colleagues to share learning activities? Where workloads are high enough to discourage if not actually prohibit these activities? There are several promising directions for supervisors that can be helpful.

Supervisors are Role Models

School psychologists are influenced by supervisors who demonstrate skill in practice themselves. Supervisors providing primary service to one or more schools are more likely to be a role model than ones that are not practicing psychologists. To be effective, the model must maintain high standards, show excitement curiosity, and an openness to differing perspectives and possibilities (Kaslow, 1977). Considering the importance that supervisors can play as role models, it may be better for agencies considering "downsizing" to examine the possibility of utilizing a part-time supervisor who also has a school caseload as an alternative to a special education director with a school psychology background.

Mentors

Supervisors can identify special interests and areas of expertise of their staff members. Giving recognition to the special strengths that psychologists have makes it possible for them to serve as mentors to their peers in areas of expertise. It is important that all psychologists have their strengths recognized, even if they are not called on by their peers for professional consultation; having confidence and recognition in at least some areas makes it more possible to admit one's deficiencies in others and feel comfortable asking for help.

Interdisciplinary Team Activities

One of the most potentially effective means of professional growth, stimulation, and motivation for change occurs when school psychologists engage in interdisciplinary activities with other professionals within the schools. This might involve team assessment interviews with children and parents, serving as joint therapists with counselors and social workers, or teaming with consultants in designing educational interventions. Professionals from other disciplines often have knowledge and skills that both supplement and enhance our own, and we can learn a great deal by working closely with other disciplines. We should be open to this and not professional chauvinists. Working with other professionals who are on our school teams has some unique advantages to offer. First, it is a source of expanding our knowledge base by having close and frequent contact with someone from a completely different background. In addition, it provides opportunities for the kind of "peer" involvement that provides a safe learning environment to try new skills. Finally, cross-disciplinary cooperation provides a powerful set of motivators and reinforcers to actually engage in new practices.

Supervision of Practicum Students and Interns

For several years the author served as a practicum supervisor for graduate school psychology students from Iowa State University. This provided a most stimulating learning experience. The supervision of practicum students should not be a one-way learning experience. Graduate students are bright, intelligent, confident, and willing to share the newest in knowledge and "technology" with their supervisors when they perceive them as open and willing to learn.

When school psychologists are within commuting distance of one of the state's training institutions, they should be encouraged to volunteer as a practicum supervisor. Although current Iowa certification standards do not require post-graduate internships in school psychology, standards for such internships are being developed between the lines, apparently.

Summary and Implications

The complexity of the role that school psychologists fill can serve as either a source of stress or an opportunity for continuous growth. There are many organizational factors that can provide impetus for and facilitate continued growth. Supervisors of school psychological services have an essential role in encouraging learning, skill development, and actual application of new learning. The future of school psychology in a changing educational environment is greatly dependent on how well its leaders can facilitate, enable, and support professional growth among its practitioners.

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Administrative Communication

Howard Jensen

AEA 5

Introduction

This chapter defines communications and applies these definitions to an agency setting, focusing upon middle management positions (supervisors) in an Area Education Agency. The supervisor is in a strategic position in the communication channels, and can transmit, filter or block two-way communication between higher management and line staff. It is through the supervisor's position that the line staff make contact with their organization. The supervisor is expected to interpret and enforce the rules, evaluate performance, pass out rewards and punishments, act as a spokesman for both the administration and line staff and generally facilitate the work of the professional group.

The supervisor has to be able to manage compromise and conflict, to balance the needs of a number of, articulate staff, and turn their feelings into problem solving energy. To do this the supervisor has to be able to communicate with staff members who engage in time consuming and potentially frustrating tasks with little tangible payoff.

This chapter will be directed to statements from supervisors and school psychologists. These statements will reflect current and past practices and what are effective and ineffective practices of agency communications.

Definitions

Communication is usually associated with an activity, such as seeing, hearing or participating in some type of conversation. Talking and listening are the usual vehicles of communication. Communication has occurred when the recipient of a message is able to repeat the message or can act correctly on the information. An effort on both ends to check, to clarify, and to summarize the information increases the effectiveness of communication.

The act of communication may appear to be simple and easy; this is not usually true. There are additional aspects of communication that are less apparent, are difficult to control, but are important. Various research studies have found that the content of the message accounts for only 7 to 10 percent of communication. Body language and the tone of the message account for the other 90 to 93 percent. A message that reaches the audience through both sight and listening will be remembered better than information that is only seen or only heard.

The importance of non-verbal (non-word) communication needs further discussion. Non-verbal messages are conveyed by body language, dress, facial expressions, personal mannerisms and the tone of the message. When there is a discrepancy between a verbal and a non-verbal message the listener is most likely to accept the non-verbal message. The effective supervisor avoids double messages by being a good listener and paying close attention to the feedback from the staff.

Administrative Communication

Positive Two-way Communication. Management expert, Peter Drucker (1974), has found downward or one-way communication is ineffective primarily because it focuses on what management wants to say rather than what the audience or staff needs and wants to know. Drucker stresses that downward communication can work only after it has been formed and shaped by upward communication. Drucker states that downward communication should be a response to the values, beliefs and aspirations of those who are receiving the message. For communication to be effective each party must have a sense of modifying the other. This sense is very important in a problem solving meeting.

Two-way communication has many advantages and it is based upon feedback. The simplified, ideal situation exists when:

1. The sender transmits a message
2. The receiver understands the message
3. The message influences the receiver
4. The receiver influences the sender.

A simple example of this is when a staff member gives a response that causes the supervisor to change what he says or thinks. The supervisor should believe that the goal of two-way communication is for the staff to express their thoughts and that the people involved are willing to express and accept differences in perception.

Symptoms of Poor Communication. In most agencies there is only a vague sense of how effective the channels of communication are. Some typical symptoms of poor communication include, but are not limited to:

1. Staff are accused of not listening.
2. Energy is being spent reworking a task because the directions were not clear.
3. Energy and time is spent tracking down people to get clarification on a process or directive.
4. There are no communication systems in place for reporting the progress of their work to the staff.

A combination of these symptoms would be reflected when there is a recurrent failure to reach a mutual understanding between the sender and receiver of an assignment or task and the staff does not know what is expected of them or how they are doing.

There are four common causes for breakdowns in communication:

1. The deficiencies of the sender. This may involve lack of clarity, insufficient volume or lack of organization.

2. The listener's lack of responsibility. This may involve poor listening skills, lack of interest or distraction from the listening task. Good listening skills are important for both the supervisor and the line staff.

3. Inappropriate means of communication. This may involve written memos when a telephone or face-to-face contact would have been more effective. Inappropriate communication could also involve a lack of written procedures, forcing staff to apply their own interpretation to verbal directives.

4. The direction of the communication is not diversified. The agency uses downward communication and does not seek input from the staff.

Agency or Administrative Communication. Good communication practices within an agency start with the dialogue and experience of one-to-one contact between management and the line staff. Usually one or a few key people within the AEA management staff intentionally or accidently set the practices in motion. The important point to stress is that there should be a choice of what practices and procedures to use. Whatever procedure is followed, it should recognize that good communication is shared perceptions. This starts with the one-to-one contact of the staff. Written communication can reinforce it, enlarge it, interpret it, but they cannot supplant one-to-one contact.

The supervisor should try to frequently relate to line staff and express a sincere interest in each person. The reason for this frequent and brief conversation should be to encourage the exchange of information. The primary purpose is not to point out an error or assign a task.

Supervisors can improve their staff communication by:

1. Understanding that the greatest need that people have at work is the need to understand the meaning of their work and their valued role in the organizational scheme of things. The writing of individual and collective mission statements and goals with the staff helps to clarify this understanding.

2. Understanding that the staff needs evidence, no matter how skimpy or tentative, that they are appreciated. The staff needs individual recognition.

3. Periodically reviewing goals and priorities with the staff and keeping them informed on the progress in meeting their goals.

4. Remember, everything the supervisor does and says transmits a message to the staff about the agency and expectation from them. Remember that body language and the tone of what is said accounts for 90 percent of the communication.

The Grapevine. The supervisor has to accept the inevitability of the "grapevine's existence" and should know how it operates within the agency. The grapevine is the first medium of communication in any agency, followed by the supervisor and the memo.

Generally rumors are developed to satisfy the need for information. They evolve from facts that have leaked or from circumstantial evidence and usually contain an element of truth. Rumors travel best when they confirm the worst fears or when they paint the best of pictures.

Rumors can be controlled, but not completely. You can control them if you learn to analyze the anxieties behind them and react to the need of the staff for accurate information. The supervisor should not distort the information if it is negative or play it up if it is positive.

Current Practice within Iowa AEAsn

During 1986, a survey was conducted to sample the variety of communication practices that were currently being used across Iowa. The school psychology supervisors and the school psychologists were asked what practices were seen as effective and ineffective.

The following lists are offered to give the reader an idea of the variety of practices or efforts. The items do overlap and are not in any order of importance.

Current Methods - Supervisors

1. Total Special Education staff meetings

2. Discipline or service center meetings

3. Individual meetings

4. Memos

5. Written notes passed on by colleagues or secretaries

6. Phone calls

7. Evaluation visits

8. Inservice meetings
9. On the job or site visits
10. Agency newsletters to AEA and/or LEA
11. Electronic mail
12. Special Education cabinet meetings
13. AEA Administrators Alert - on a current or important issue or topic

Most Effective Methods - Supervisors

1. Discipline or service center meetings
2. Individual or face to face meetings
3. Special Education staff meetings (total)
4. Phone calls
5. Memos
6. Periodic newsletters
7. Cabinet meetings

Ineffective Methods - Supervisors

1. Special Education staff meeting (total)
2. Memos
3. Phone calls
4. Newsletters
5. Satellite office visitation

Current Methods - School Psychologists

1. Beginning of the year orientation
2. Newsletters
3. General or total Special Education staff meeting
4. Discipline meeting
5. Individual conferences

6. Phone contracts
7. Memos
8. Inservice meetings
9. Messages via colleagues or secretaries
10. Electronic mail
11. Lectures to the group by the supervisor
12. Meetings with LEA and AEA staff
13. Office visits and meetings
14. Breakfast sessions before work hours
15. Open door policy with the supervisor or administrator
16. Circulation of written materials - administrative reports
17. Summary of board meetings
18. AEA Education Association meetings
19. Minutes of the Special Education supervisors meetings
20. Directives through the chain from above
21. Semester breaks with workshops and orientation

Most Effective Methods - School Psychologists

1. Discipline meetings - regular or monthly
2. As needed called meetings
3. Monthly updates in memo form
4. Individual conferences
5. Memos
6. Phone calls
7. Electronic mail

Ineffective Methods - School Psychologists

1. Rewriting of goals and objectives
2. Special Education staff meetings
3. Open door policy
4. Lectures to the group
5. Memos
6. Messages via colleagues or secretaries
7. Summary of the board minutes as written by the AEA administrator

What Helps - What Hurts

Some of the items noted by survey respondents appeared on both the effective and ineffective lists. Perceptions are different and what works in one agency may not be effective in another. Discipline and individual meetings were seen as the most effective and productive communication method because there was the opportunity for an exchange of information and feedback. Large Special Education staff meetings were not viewed as productive or worth the required time. There were both positive and negative responses on the effectiveness of phone calls and memos. Phone calls are subject to the memories of both parties. They were seen as effective for frequent support. The memo was not seen as effective because it was over-used, and a one way type of communication.

Because of the objections and confusion concerning the use of the "Memo", the following statements are made. An effective memo should do three things:

1. Tell the reader what they should know
2. Tells the reader what it means
3. Tells the reader what action, if any, to take and when to take it

Developing Good Listening Skills

Being a good listener is a skill. This skill can be improved with practice. Listening serves the purposes of:

1) Receiving information from the staff member, and,
2) Helping to solve problems. The person being listened to has the feeling that their ideas or concerns are being received and the problem solving process is underway.

There are at least four types of "Listeners" in the communication interaction. It is important to assess oneself as a listener (Kroth, 1985).

1) Passive listener - the listener attends to the speaker on a nonverbal level. They give a smile, a nod of the head, or any other nonverbal sign of approval.

2) Active Listening - the listener is reflecting back the ideas and feelings that are expressed. This approach attempts to identify the problems and situations of concern. The listener tries to verify the issues and puts them into perspective without talking over the problem.

3) Passive non listening - the listener hears what is being said but is not listening to the feeling content of the messages.

4) Active non listening - the listener appears to take equal tie in the conversation. They are waiting their turn to talk and are rehearsing what they will say. At it's extreme it can appear that there are two separate conversations occurring at the same time.

From this brief description of listening types it is suggested that Active Listening encourages the best exchange of accurate information. Ralph Nichols, in this booklet on communication has listed a number of ways for a supervisor to become a better active listener.

1. Listen for the areas of concern - pick out the useful information on the main issue(s).

2. Judge content, not delivery - listen for the message.

3. Hold your fire - if you get upset over one point you will miss some ideas.

4. Listen for ideas - don't memorize every fact but just the general idea.

5. Develop the habit of asking checking questions - check to see if the message you have sent has been understood.

6. Use paraphrase or restatement - state the others idea in your own words.

Summary and Implications

Most research on the subject agrees that it is difficult for managers or supervisors to motivate employees. It is possible to create an atmosphere in the workplace wherein the staff becomes self motivated. This atmosphere is created by good communication approaches that allow for the multi-directional flow of information and ideas. A critical element in this atmosphere is empathy. The supervisor has to be able to identify with individual staff members in order to increase the level of understanding of that person's thoughts and feelings. There has to be a mixture of firmness, self discipline, honesty, kindness and common sense. Good active listening skills are important in developing and maintaining good communication approaches.

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Promoting and Expanding Professional Services and Roles

Jack Montgomery

AEA 6

Introduction

Beginning a journey is relatively easy. However, if you don't know where you are going, then any road will take you there. To promote and expand professional services and roles presupposes that someone on staff (hopefully the supervisor) knows which route to take. Such knowledge is enhanced by experience and route maps (guidelines) which may be used both for direction and accountability.

The map followed in this chapter will cover supervision, current practice, and future directions in the promotion and expansion of the psychologist's services and role. Supervision has been subdivided into categories of experience, knowledge, management, and creativity. State guidelines, board/organizational policies, and state supervisors' selective views on standard operating procedures will be reviewed under the rubric of current practice. In future directions, the author will touch upon the influence of technology, rapidity of change, blending disciplines, accountability and ethics.

The role of supervisor is sometimes presumptious, sometimes pretentious, sometimes noble and altruistic, but always busy. One has to have some awareness of, and perspective for, the history of school psychology. What have past "best practices" been? Were they efficacious? Have any good practices been forgotten or are simply no longer used because other modes are currently ascendant? Most importantly, what might be future practice as one ponders the best of the past and the best of the present while weaving in the promise of technology. The ever present body of scientific knowledge is indeed available for the willing social scientist who believes in the thrill and challenge of living on the edge of competence. Only by pushing the limits will we continue to stretch and grow.

Successful supervision requires a psychologist-manager to be willing to promote change and be able to direct, focus, and control the forces set in motion. To arrive at such a level of competence requires knowledge and experience in technical, economic, social, conceptual, and organizational skill areas. Once the renaissance supervisor has garnered this expertise it would be a nice touch to add creativity to the already formidable resume. This should influence supervisor production as well as staff outcomes. NOTE: It doesn't hurt sometimes, as a model/leader, to be a producer also. The process of management must include planning, motivating, organizing, and controlling-the latter to the extent outcomes may be predicted, measured, and replicated.

Experience

Methods. A major facet of experience in the work world is learning how to do jobs in certain "correct" ways (i.e., conforming to organizational rules, procedures, or policies). Initially, performing tasks in proscribed ways may be alien and feel uncomfortable; but, as one persists, external impositions and constraints become internalized. Practices become habits and at least part of these habits comprise future behaviors and influence each supervisor's modus operandi as s/he "draws from experience."

In school psychology, the procedures to be followed are more often than not outlined in state rules and regulations or intermediate or local agency service delivery system guidelines. A problem with service delivery systems, in general, is that, like all guidelines, they tend to become law and brook little opposition or deviation.

Service delivery systems are usually envisioned, analogically, as thoroughbred racehorses but often end as camels-not so much from intent as from unanticipated variables emerging as time goes on. For example, intended target populations may not have been represented and mandates to change automatically bring about an obstinate resistance.

Change means pain for some and it is especially severe when it comes without much warning. Once the aggregate metabolic system becomes somewhat mollified or inured to any new system-even though the original intent is scarcely recognizable-habituation takes over and a delivery system is in place. Time, like might, almost makes right. One doesn't have to know why-just that this is the way it is done and it is in black and white. Delivery systems are generally concerned with process-the "right" way to do things. Identification of major or even minor problems is often lost in the convolution of process-with all the i dottings and t crossings. The "thou shalts" and "shalt nots" are put in place at this juncture and people begin to see clearly that this is the only way things are done with little tolerance for deviation. It's sort of like "how could we ever have done anything else or done it any other way" and anyone who messes with this "only way" risks sacrilege and dishonorable discharge.

Designing a delivery system usually takes the route of think tanking, formalization, and implementation. If data and/or time are limited, the risk is run that a new system will set up, like concrete, in relatively quick fashion. A calcified delivery system, can then become a model which everyone is asked to follow. When latecomers challenge they are usually put in their places and the "system" marches on. Care should be taken to build frequent analysis and refinements into the "model" utilizing child change feedback. In that way, flexibility will be enhanced and allowances will be made for change as knowledge demands.

If a model is conceptualized as dynamic and allowed to adapt and adopt a structure and format through field usage, feedback, and analysis, then it would appear a reasonable match has been found between theory and practice. Educational models of delivery tend to change rapidly in the beginning and then more slowly over time. Since no human creator can anticipate all exigencies, those responsible for implementation and conformity generally have many concerns. Some perceive procedures, once reduced to black and white, to be inviolate and are conscience stricken if every move made is not done "just right," while others simply set about to test yet another system. It is recognized, and appreciated, that most staff are not represented by these relative extremes. However, change is probably more often impacted by the former than by the quiet, moderate majority. Questions about proper or appropriate procedures are many times answered spontaneously because no "right way" has yet been established and thus guidelines are formed and change occurs.

Methods may be designed, voluntarily implemented, imposed, or long-standing. Depending upon which side of the administrative fence one is standing may determine which is experienced. Organizational stage or level of development will have some impact on what one experiences as a new employee. If one has joined an organization during a state of flux or formation, there is likely to be more allowance made for autonomy, and it will be expected that staff members make independent decisions. Energy, excitement, and motivation are evident and a sense of equality in sharing and contribution is experienced by the majority. If one moves into a mature organization that has traditionally espoused the "right way" and administrators have plenty of time to manage and supervise, the odds are that autonomy and independent decision making are no longer cherished characteristics either sought or promoted in staff. This may create a state of anxiety and require personal structuring (mildly compulsive repetitive behavior) to allay such anxiety.

Techniques. Techniques are designed to implement model intent. If the model demands children be assessed, labeled, and placed in pull-out programs-how does one go about assessing, synthesizing the data, sharing it with any reliability, let alone validity, and making sure in the long run, significant child change occurs?

School psychologists roughly wear two very large hats in the technique arena. They have to have been exposed, be still cognizant, and, hopefully, competent in using a variety of psychometric and psychologic techniques. There is however, a third important category extant and that is formetrics-the ability to use all manner of forms and checklists designed to measure various model checkpoints or emphases. Filling out and submitting the appropriate paperwork generally pleases supervisors and other administrators. When paperwork is not dealt with forthrightly and efficiently, other skills are questioned. It behooves all supervisors attempting to optimize staff outcomes to alert them to the importance of paper timelines.

It is incumbent upon each supervisor to evaluate collective and individual staff techniques. Are there a variety of models and techniques from which each staff member draws? Are they applied judiciously with measurable results? Affective education does not always share equal billing with cognitive education. Since self-confidence, and especially the belief that "I can" are characteristics considered to impinge heavily upon academic success, counseling techniques that enhance these traits are invaluable. A rather large armamentarium is required to effect "best" matches between presenting problems that are barriers to learning and solutions that minimize these same problems. Which theories provide the best possible umbrella from which to select strategy techniques? Would the psychoanalytic model which would allow one to investigate coping mechanisms be most useful? Are coping mechanisms used by a child facilitative such as humor, sublimation, compensation or are they debilitative such as suppression, depression, acting out? Once identified, then what specifically does one do? Would learning theory with its myriad operant conditioning techniques be the model of choice? What about social learning theory that introducer the intervening variable as being of some import? Do directive therapies such as Rational Emotive Therapy (RET) with required assignments work best when tailor made? And then there is cognitive learning theory with all the imaging, auto-suggestive, and thought stopping techniques. Should a supervisor and the staff be aware of and concerned about model/technique knowledge and competence? Of course, since only preplanning and control facilitate replication. "Winging it" may save some energy up front but will exact it's toll when it comes accounting time—what has been done and what child change has occurred.

Equipment. Every department of school psychology should have an area designated "the lab." School psychologists are wunderkind when it comes to solving learning problems but are usually frustrated when it comes to plying their trade outside of testing and wordsmithing. If a severely or profoundly handicapped youngster has problems with head control, what does the psychologist usually do? Generally, advice is given in the recommendation section of a written report, and somebody else is supposed to do something. In this case perhaps the occupational or physical therapist should assess the child. But, if after the psychologist has consulted with team members and it is determined that the child would receive more benefit from stimuli emphasizing volitional control than periodic external manipulation, then a concrete, rather than abstract, prescription would seem to be the more appropriate. One could move into the lab and in a relatively short time devise a velcro head band, mount a mercury switch, and attach the device to a pocket radio. Music could then be selected to motivate.

Biofeedback equipment including an electromyograph, a galvanic skin responder, thermistors, mirrors, temperature strips, thermometers and biodots could be used in conjunction with other devices to enhance or diminish emotional/behavioral responses such as relaxation, test anxiety, and school phobia. Experimental or proven circuitry could be hooked up on breadboards to demonstrate worth and then miniaturized or made more compact for application. Microswitch technology could not only be demonstrated and shared with team members but kept current. The limitations of such a lab would be a function of the self-imposed constraints of the supervisor and staff. Rat mazes and stereotaxic equipment might be questionable, but who knows what weird ideas lurk in the minds of school psychology supervisors.

Knowledge

Technical/Economic Skill Area. A technically proficient supervisor has the ability to support others as they use their knowledge, methods, techniques, and equipment—acquired from experience, education, and training—for the performance of specific tasks. It is incumbent upon a supervisor and school psychologists to be familiar with a broad spectrum of "state of the art" applications addressing learning and the many variables impacting upon child change. Human knowledge and corresponding technology is beginning to accelerate past geometric progression to the point of exponentiality. Changes currently occurring in holistic or behavioral medicine cannot be ignored. More precision in application will become the norm and the old "I feel good about what is happening" approach, will no longer suffice. Ever present is the delicate and tenuous relationship between economics and technology. It's one thing to be challenged by new techniques, devices, and materials designed to impact change, and quite another to be able to support such practice. The supervisor is responsible for maximizing the match between monies, staff development, and child change.

Human/Social Skills Area The emphasis on human or social skills has always been considered important, but today it is critical. It is interesting to note that few consumers challenge technical proficiency, knowledge, or even general professional competence but wax or wane ala receptivity or resistance as a function of the extent the service provider is perceived as possessing adequate relatingness skills. Human skill application presupposes a naturalness, intuitiveness, and deliberateness in interrelationships that is facilitative i.e., an ability and judgment in working with and through people, including an understanding of motivation and an application of effective leadership. Interpersonal skills that are usable in ordinary human situations are probably the single most impactful set of tools any supervisor or staff member possesses.

Conceptual/Organizational Skill Area. Conceptual skill is the ability to understand the complexities of the overall organization and where one's own discipline fits into the organization (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982). This knowledge allows one to act according to the objectives of the total organization and attend to the goals and needs of one's own immediate group. A knowledge of organizational structure, culture, domain politic, and group dynamics is a prerequisite to synthesize administrative and discipline needs and goal perceptions. As one moves from lower to higher levels of management less technical skill tends to be needed; whereas, more conceptual skill is necessary. It would be very difficult for a full time supervisor to retain all the skills that line staff possess. If the supervisor does not need to know how to perform all the specific tasks at the operational level s/he should be able to see how all the functions are interrelated to be able to accomplish the goals of the total organization. Each skill area is important for the optimalization of people and organizations, but the common denominator that appears to be crucial at all levels is caring—manifested by human interest and interpersonal skill.

Management

As managers, supervisors are engaged in getting things done with and through people. The extent to which they can accomplish departmental and organizational goals and objectives depends primarily on motivated individuals. Personnel needs have to be understood and addressed. Staff have to know not only what the organizational strategies, long range plans, and short-term or annual goals are but also current status. Through feedback of results and follow-up they can then compare accomplishments with plans. When outcomes have deviated from expectations, appropriate adjustments have to be made.

Planning. The supervisor who is successful at promoting and expanding services needs to be a skilled planner. To be a good planner s/he needs to possess a high quality crystal ball no smaller in diameter than four inches and with no cracks or chips. Actually, to infer that successful supervisors need to be able to read the future is misleading. All they have to do is be able to envision and, with a certain degree of probability (above chance), be able to predict future trends that may impinge upon allocations of capital, material resources, and personnel. The availability of material resources will depend, in large part, on the status of funds available and in turn upon the political climate (i.e., prevailing party and philosophy).

With advances constantly being made in technology, planning must be made for the acquisition of new skills and de-emphasis of other practices that have been demonstrated to be be less effective. The observation that the computer revolution is upon us is redundant, but future possibilities of use for educators is not. Industrial uses demonstrate what we know is available technologically, and seem like something out of Star Trek compared to what we in education are currently practicing. There is every reason to suppose that eventually learning may be assessed by observing brain wave patterns, associated with given assignments, displayed on monitors and suggested remediations printed for immediate trial. New wave patterns would then be generated for new analyses.

There are other equally exciting changes occurring which will also affect our professional lives and practices (e.g., artificial intelligence). However, to be prepared for change requires planning. Planning involves setting goals and objectives for one's organization or discipline and developing workmaps showing how such goals and objectives are to be accomplished.

Motivating. Motivation, as a force behind production is generally unquestioned. Motives are the "whys" and "determiners" of behavior. They arouse and maintain activity and provide the focus and direction of the behavior of an individual. Motives, or needs, wants, and desires are, practically speaking, interchangeable. It has been estimated that eight cylindered people can hold on to their jobs by utilizing only two cylinders at any given time. That is, performing at approximately 25 percent of their ability puts them at no great risk of being fired. More highly motivated people, can perform as high as 80 to 90 percent of their ability and are thus significantly more contributive to an organization.

It would seem, then, that a primary concern for every supervisor, is to assess what it takes to have a motivated work force. People need to be committed to something to find satisfaction in their lives. If they can find that sense of meaning in their work and the supervisor can be facilitative in that quest, the organization to which they are committed has a greatly improved chance to be effective. It might be useful to establish a motivational or need profile on each staff member. There will be commonalities, of course, but until such time as they are determined, individual needs may be addressed. We know that some are moved inspirationally, others more concretely. John F. Kennedy somehow knew or intuited that the rather subtle message of "Camelot" with all its ramifications, of altruism, nobility, purity, and selflessness was timely and captured the imaginations of many. They were inspired and were motivated to respond in semi-knightly fashion. Others need a sense of mission or a change in life style or diversity in the market place. Stultification sets in if the status quo persists too long. Even the most conscientious staff occasionally need change in their lives to "keep the batteries charged" and interest/productivity optimal. Since motivations and needs are often not even known to the performer, the supervisor is challenged to continue honing skills in dispositional/situational analysis. It will pay off when all staff members receive their excellence in education gold medals.

Organizing. Each staff member has a unique personality which needs to be frequently matched with situational variables for optimalization of services and roles to occur. Organization involves the bringing together of people, capital, and equipment in the most effective way to accomplish goals and objectives.

An organization is like an open social system with all aspects being interrelated. It might be useful to consider several subsystems within an organization. When integrating or dovetailing the different resources, questions may be asked about possible repercussions, short or long-term effects, and the relationship to departmental and organizational goals. If one were to consider the following subsystem: economic/technological, human/social, administrative/structural, and possibly a conceptual/-organizational subsystem and determine that, it would be wise to review expenditures planned for new and more efficient computers to be used in the word processing department, what question/s might be asked? Given a fixed budget, if an expenditure is made for equipment in one subsystem, what will be the cost in other subsystems? Will personnel need to be reduced? Will summer programs have to be curtailed?

Essentially, organizing has to do with determining the major parts of an organization and developing questions that facilitiate decision-making. It should be recognized that any decision will have a ripple effect and seldom stands alone. The school psychology supervisor could influence innovative outcomes if s/he were to utilize pre-decision questions, related to subsystem relationships, and develop probability statements before submitting proposals to administrators or at board meetings.

Controlling. Controlling is really the evaluation process. What goals have been established? Have they been made sufficiently articulate to be measured? Against what criteria are they measured and what is done as a result? Controlling involves feedback and, hopefully, fine-tuning to make sure that there are no significant discrepancies between intent and outcomes. Appropriate adjustments should be made where outcomes have deviated from expectations.

There is a caution to be observed in this field of endeavor and every school psychology supervisor needs to be alert to the problem. Evaluations of organizational goals tend always to be done in one of two ways: (1). Objectivity seems to grow wings and we all begin to assess goals not against outcome, but against some personality characteristics such as what people say they will do, how much time and effort have been reportedly expended, and sometimes popularity. (2) In lieu of sound planning, motivating, and organizing, it is tempting to "wing it." If I check my pulse, blood pressure, respiration rate, and the number of butterflies currently on the loose in my stomach-and everything seems quiescent-then what the hell, everything must be alright. "There is no sense messing with success" or "if it ain't broke, don't fix it."

Innovative practices can be encouraged if actual measurement of results achieved are compared to well-defined standards, and rewards are linked to outcomes. When objectives are clearly spelled out, there should be no need for a supervisor to be overly involved in "managing." We have some of the most highly trained, professional people in the world on our collective staffs, so instead of bogging them down by practicing "overactive management"—the delegation or assignment of so many activities that everybody forgets what the original objective really was-negotiate or assign a single project, turn them loose, and get out of the way. Not only will the number of finished projects increase, but the quality will amaze and astound you.

Creativity. The definition of creativity is not often consensually validated. However, this author will focus on an operational definition and proceed, as though reification works. Base metal into gold ha! Creativity is defined as "the development of a new or unconventional method or product that practically serves a unique purpose." The creative supervisor with a strike force of creative psychologists can look at problems that may exist between peers, or a given child and family or school personnel and wax fluent and flexible in generating solutions. The SCAMPER checklist may be all that is needed to amplify alternatives. SCAMPER is an acronym for a series of thinking processes (Eberie, 1977). When the checklist is used, one starts off with a particular object, or specific problem, in mind and simply thinks about ways to change by making comparisons with each item on the list: S=Substitute-what could be used instead? C=combine-what could be added? A=adapt-what could be adjusted to suit a condition or purpose? M=modify-how could the color, shape, size, or form be altered? P=put to other uses-what else could it be used for? E=eliminate-what could be removed or taken away? R-reverse-how could it be used opposite to it's original intent? How could the pattern, sequence, or format be rearranged? The main thing here, is that the supervisor is trained in creative processes and practice, has the understanding of the importance discipline specific knowledge and product play in creative outcomes, and that s/he can demonstrate for others how to maximize their own problem solving skills.

Current Practice

State Guidelines/Intermediate and Local Policies

The rules of Special Education which are intended to implement Iowa code sections 670-12.1 through 12.55 include guidelines for supervisors and staff to follow. Areas covered are scope, general principles, and definitions; methods of providing special education; district and area education agency responsibilities; planning; services and program management; related services and medications; personnel; facilities, materials, and equipment; program review; consumer participation; special education appeal procedures; finance; and, state plan. The Area Education Agency special education delivery systems are designed to implement the state rules. In most AEAs, the district boards have policy statements adopting the respective service delivery systems.

The Iowa Department of Public Instruction, now to be the Department of Education, has encouraged innovative practice. A tested method for initiating new projects has been to present a reasonably tight, cogent plan of action, accompanied by a reasonably comprehensive plan for assessing outcomes. This approach is taken for official approval and sometimes garners financial support. All innovative practices, of which there have been many, have not always required official sanction, but have instead been simply unofficially blessed.

Supervisor Philosophy and Practice

This section is a survey report. All questions and answers from the survey are not shared, however, those that seem the most incisive are. One is never sure just how a supervisor is going to respond to a supervisor generated survey but one thing that can be counted on is that the responses have to be edited.

Question: Describe philosophically, or realistically, how you envision your role as an advocate and/or how you play out your role as advocate.

Response: "I see my role as primarily four fold: 1). educating powers that be...boards, various administrators; 2) creating/maintaining a climate that encourages risk taking on the part of both the "powers" and practitioners; 3). facilitating professional skill development; 4). maintaining staff morale in the face of obstacles to role expansion. The latter is getting harder all the time."

Response: "The supervisor's role as advocate for professional groups is that of giving direction to the staff in such a way that learning experiences are made available to the staff which enables them to see a new direction to improve their skills and to continually gain new knowledge about their chosen profession."

Response: "As supervisor I have frequent opportunities to provide input in a variety of settings regarding services provided to school psychologists in our AEA. Policy is routinely discussed with the Director in both private conversation as well as group meetings. I see it as a major responsibility of mine to convey observations and recommendations about role changes which would increase the effectiveness of school psychologists working in my AEA."

Reponse: "Expose staff to new ideas and techniques; encourage experimentation and innovation; write individual staff goals which promote the individual's growth."

Response: "1). as a role model; 2). providing best practices; 3). setting expectations for performance; 4). providing information to schools regarding school psychologist's roles; 5). developing role expectations held by the Director."

Response: "Encourage staff to pursue areas of expertise or interest; give reading on new techniques, reviews; assign staff role of demonstrating new concepts in discipline meetings."

Question: Do you believe school psychology should actively seek alignment with the physical/biological sciences?

Response: "No. School psychology has multiple roots. Biological/-physiological psychology is important but less than applied educational psychology. Emphasizing physical factors is not likely to lead to more effective school based services."

Response: :This is somewhat difficult to answer. I strongly believe that what school psychologists can bring to the educational setting is knowledge of both scientific and psychological principles which will facilitate problems solving. I would not however, see value in expending energies attempting to align ourselves with any other professional disciplines. Our worth needs to be measured by the consequences of our decision making."

Response: "Yes. To the degree that we can increase the reliability of what we do-keeping in mind the importance of the applicability of our services within the educational setting we serve."

Response: "No. I think we can learn a lot from physical and biological sciences, but I also feel that we have unique characteristics that belong to our profession alone. For example, I do not feel that human behavior is as predictable or as easily described in laws etc. as are the occurences in the physical/biological sciences."

Response: "I don't know exactly what is meant by 'alignment' but because there are physical and biological components to all human behavior (our game), we obviously must have some awareness and knowledge of their game, with linkages to them and effective communication."

Response: "Yes. Take advantage of recent findings in neuro-science and practical activities that spring from those findings."

Response: "Yes. It has been shown that a holistic approach to treatment is effective and that many psychological problems have physical/biological correlates and/or antecedents."

Several other questions asked were: What are some ways you have utilized current "high technology" to expand the roles of school psychologists?; and, what are some methods you employ to promote roles, other than traditional, for your school psychologists?

It can be quickly seen that there are a number of different views held by state supervisors. This depends however, on how a question is asked. If a question asks for, essentially, a yes or no with a follow-up explanation, there is likely to be noticeable diversity among the responses. Also, if the question is asked in such a way as to tap a belief system, then the "I believe" responses will also tend to be measurably different. A third type of question that asks simply "what do you do or how do you do such and such in your agency" seems to promote more unanimity.

Most supervisors seem to be receptive, but mildly cynical or cautious about the "high tech revolution" that is in progress. It's true, that great strides have been made during the past few years, but it also seems to be true that education and educators are seldom early recipients of beneficial fall-out.

Industry is able to utilize some very sophisticated computer design analyses to solve problems while school psychologists and their educational colleagues are still trying to develop data bases to be able to ask questions about populations they serve. Attempts are also being made to weave graphics, statistics, and narrative together for more understandable and accountable reports.

Changes that are sensed to be occurring are prompting supervisors to question many of the traditional methods that have been practiced in the past. That much, we seem to have in common.

Future Directions

There are a number of scientific changes and relatively new fields of thought one might speculate about in respect to their future impact upon school psychology. One of the most exciting areas, and still pending, is the computer and the determination to bring intelligence to the machine. Artificial intelligence, with a number of subfields such as robotics, automated vision, automated problem solving, expert systems, and natural language processing, is providing psychologists with fresh ideas for experimentation and an opportunity to build far more sophisticated models of human behavior. School psychologists have long endeavored to develop systematic means of using psychoeducational assessment data to plan interventions. They have also, for some time, used computers to analyze their data statistically. But, the speed and ease with which an expert system promises to process data and enhance accuracy and efficiency are visions the practitioner can only imagine today. To read the recommendation section of almost any psychological report, though, is to recognize that an automatic problem solving or recommendation generating system, requiring more input data than currently used and contributing far more alternatives, would be facilitative for any user.

We are not entirely sure just how many of the "new" thoughts or practices are going to be promoted by school psychology supervisors-or used by their staffs but, who could have foreseen the computer impact a decade or so ago? Some areas that bear watching are: curriculum based assessments-direct and continuous measurement of school related tasks, multiple intelligence, behaviorial medicine, nutrition, fiber optics, the therapeutic power of fragrance, hypnosis, direct teaching of thinking

skills, how to study, behavioral consultation, creativity, the psychology of personnel management, and those many techniques that promote affective education and well-being.

There are several things we can count on. Change is occurring rapidly and it will be a supervisor's responsibility to assess the importance, availability, practicality, and "pay-off" to children. Many disciplines are interested in the nature and welfare of the individual, so blending and borrowing knowledge and techniques seems inevitable. There will be ethical issues involved as new techniques are utilized to optimize learning. Consumer rights have been thoroughly addressed by the special education community in the last decade and there will be a continuing demand for accountability. Educators will be held responsible for doing what they say they can do for children.

Summary

School psychology supervisors have exciting jobs. Opportunity would seem to be an apt descriptor for the role. This is the chance in a lifetime to practice all we know and/or think we know. One can review the past, attempt to direct the present, and plan for the future.

Adaptability

One should be familiar with group dynamics and idiosyncratic behaviors-what to expect and when. Supervisors meet a number of times each year with their respective staffs and individuals for information dissemination, workshops, inservice training, staffing, and counseling. Meetings are expected but it takes knowledge, experience, and skill to provide sufficient focus for accomplishment or resolution. If one does not practice assessing people needs and perspectives, one is likely to find press and stress constant factors. Analyzing and predicting outcomes is a protective device-a positive coping mechanism, and certainly more adaptable than "winging it" or being on the defensive.

As a supervisor, being receptive to the new, tolerant of others' beliefs or positions and, generally, just being mellow and laid back until all the facts are in ma'am, are characteristics synonymous with adaptability. This style smacks a little of the laissez-faire or possibly theory y type of leadership, but it allows the creative, productive, and self-starters on staff to "show their stuff." This style also promotes caring guidance for those not so vanguard or autonomous.

Self-Appraisal

The supervisor is required to evaluate staff periodically and it would seem only good practice to solicit feedback from others about the supervisory job and role. Each supervisor should have some idea about his or her own areas of expertise but should check these perceptions out frequently. Whenever "problems" seem to be particularly knotty or numerous, it's time to conduct a self-appraisal. Is there a question of time and would time analysis be profitable? Have listening skills atrophied? What about personal knowledge and demonstrated competence?

Should a course or two be considered or should one take on a case load to understand, again, what it is really like?

Demonstrated Competence

There are certain areas in which the supervisor is expected to have more knowledge and skill than the line psychologist. Assessment, diagnostic, intervention, writing, and possibly research skills are givens, but fair management practice/s, budgetary, mediation, public relations, and planning skills are expected competence areas and often tested. The supervisor has been able to observe, from year to year, assignment outcomes-school, administrative, and staff relationships and should be able to advise any new assignees how to "stay out of trouble" in any particular school system. If "trouble" occurs, all participants expect the supervisor to resolve the problem with everybody a winner. The supervisor may not be able to leap over tall buildings with a single bound, but s/he is expected to be a fair and competent administrator, as well as psychologist.

Productivity

Supervisors are expected to be on the road a great deal. Staff need to know that there are people from the central or satellite offices that care enough to attend staffings, are available for consultation, are liaison workers and public relations agents and, in general, are sufficiently visible to dispel any myth that they do, indeed, exist. supervisors have to be productive in the sense that they allot time for staff in the field and, can also get their own assigned office tasks completed. Personnel management has to be demonstrated but, when possible, professional competencies in such areas as research, publication, and teaching need also to be demonstrated to model "good" leadership.

Public Relations

Public relations have a lot to do with "relatingness" or social skills. If one is sincerely interested in others to the extent they know something about their families, hobbies, philosophies, school and child concerns, then one does not tend to come across as an intruder who wants to tell everybody how to do their jobs. Others consider themselves child advocates also and it never works to the benefit of any child when battle lines have to be drawn for win or lose issues. Experience in mediation, sincerity, and being a good listener are prerequisites for effective public relations.

Adventure

This is where it all comes together. To be an adventurerer, one must have some propensity for risk-taking. Also, anyone on an adventure is generally having fun. To be able to smile inwardly, or laugh outwardly, about the excitement and joy of one's job is, to paraphrase Gibran, to be intimate with one of life's great secrets. This is where one sees a large picture and attempts to dovetail or fit pieces like a puzzle. Perhaps, there is a small risk here, an approval there, but one draws on one's own sense of confidence, competence, and vision of the future to contribute to service delivery systems, staff training, and child change.

Here is also the opportunity to utilize experience and formal training to synthesize knowledge about "best practices" in supervision. What are the latest admonitions or recommendations about the use of resources? What are some of the best methods and techniques to enhance learning? What will be considered adequate adjunctive equipment to accomplish organizational goals and objectives? Is one the type of supervisor to "wing it" or will one risk creative planning, motivating, organizing, and controlling with the sense that new adventures are unfolding? Supervising can be very fulfilling but occasional risks have to be taken.

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Designing and Providing Inservice for School Psychologists

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AEA 7

Abstract

Inservice training is a key element of a comprehensive program of school psychological services. A primary factor is to maintain a clear link between individual staff needs and the specific inservice topics that are chosen. Traditional inservice methods have successfully met a part of school psychologist's needs but alternative approaches are necessary to address the individual needs of school psychologists and the changing demands of the educational system.

The supervisor's role in developing of an effective inservice program is best guided by staff needs and expectations, and understanding of the potential for field application, and setting up an effective transition between the inservice and its incorporation into the daily work of the school psychologist.

Introduction

Inservice training represents a primary element of professional development. A mushrooming knowledge base, technological advances, and social and legal changes all accentuate the need for a continuing and vital inservice program for school psychologists (Hynd, 1981). The impact of these changes and advances on the methods used to address school and child needs is significant. A well defined inservice program develops the base for an ongoing system of information delivery and behavior change within the context of these changes and advances.

A survey of school psychology supervisors in Iowa identifies various other primary benefits from inservice programs. Some of the benefits noted were: motivation, based on new awareness of other staff's skills; team cohesiveness, when there is the opportunity to observe and analyze new approaches as a team; aid in recruiting and keeping staff who work in geographically isolated areas; enhancement of staff morale; and stimulation of creative solutions.

Three phases of establishing inservice training programs for school psychologists are: the initial design, the presentation, and the transition to eventual application. The role of the supervisor of school psychologists is critical when the purpose of the inservice training is to develop new skills or change present behavior. The purpose of this chapter is to identify characteristics of these three phases that focus on successful and functional inservice training.

Current Practice

The Design

The initial design of an inservice for school psychologists must focus on the expressed and measured needs of the staff to be involved in the training. A recent survey of school psychologist supervisors in Iowa shows that 75% of the responding supervisors rely on a needs assessment as their primary source of ideas for topics of future inservice training. Secondary methods that are used for identifying topics are: reviewing journals, sampling state and national conferences, staff input at meetings and observing national and state trends. The relevance of the topic to what the psychologists identifies as a need area assures a solid base to develop the design of the inservice.

The design of the inservice is also a function of the purpose of the training. Korinek, Schmid, and McAdams (1985) identify three types of inservice, which serve distinct purposes.

Type I inservice, information transmission, is for the sole purpose of increasing the knowledge of a special group. Type II inservice, skill acquisition, has the primary purpose of strengthening existing skills or to develop new ones. Type III inservice, behavior change, is intended to develop a specific set of desired behaviors.

Once this key factor in the design is identified, the supervisor can build an inservice program that realistically fits with considerations such as: amount of inservice desired during a given year, cost and time factors related to availability of presenters, acceptance of the topics and goals of the inservice by the administration, coordination of certain inservices with other support team members, and clear advance notice to the staff regarding the schedule of the inservices.

The design of an inservice program must also incorporate some form of incentive, or reinforcement (Korinek et al., 1985). A survey of the Iowa supervisors shows that 100% of those responding provide paid contact days for attending approved inservices. Other incentives focused on various amounts of financial reimbursement for travel and registration costs.

Consideration of these design factors will promote the staffs' attendance and participation in the presentation phase of inservice training. The strength of the design is further enhanced by staff participation throughout this planning and development phase.

The Presentation

The presentation is the working part of the inservice planning. It is the mechanism that forms the basis of everything from the introduction of the presenter to the return of the last evaluation card.

Presenters at each different inservice will use various styles, varying from lecture and small group activities to video demonstrations, and extensive handouts. One commodity that should exist for effective inservice is that each topic be expressed in a manner that connects with a practice of the psychologist in his or her work. The more application the participants see to daily work the more successful the inservice will be. Examples of this are: answers to practitioners case study questions and applications put in common written formats such as student reports or individual educational plans.

The duration of the session, number attending, and size of room are all elements of the presentation that are best reviewed ahead of time with the presenter to avoid any last minute confusion. These factors relate back to the original purpose of the inservice as well. Audience size often has to be limited based on the presenter's style.

It is important that previously arranged time factors be followed. The environment of the inservice must also be considered. The clarity of overheads, number of tables or type of handouts can become as important as the content of the presentation if its problematic for those attending.

A remaining presentation issue is evaluation of the inservice; two areas may be evaluated. First, the inservice itself may be assessed on a continuum of ineffective to effective. Second, the amount of change in the participants' behavior can be evaluated if the purpose of the inservice was to encourage skill acquisition or develop a set of desired behaviors.

TABLE 1

INSERVICE & EVALUATION CARD Sector_____

INSERVICE TOPIC_____ FACILITATOR_____

DISCIPLINE_____ LOCATION_____ Credit 1/4, 1/2, 1 or ___

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:

1. WHAT BENEFITS DID YOU GAIN FROM THIS SERVICE?

2. HOW COULD THIS INSERVICE HAVE BEEN IMPROVED?

3. SUGGESTIONS FOR OTHER SPEAKERS/TOPICS RELATED TO THIS INSERVICE:

I WOULD RATE THIS INSERVICE: 1 2 3 4

ineffective effective

SIGNATURE:_____ DATE:_____

To receive credit, this card MUST be completed at the inservice and returned to the facilitator.

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Table 1 presents an example of an evaluation format for assessing the effectiveness of the presentation. Using this type of an evaluation card provides a quick method of documenting a staff's attitudes about the presentation. The card also provides the presenter with a clear critic of their presentation. In-depth assessment is often best derived through secondary questionnaires or through general staff discussions. Although this evaluation card has the limitation of being brief, after a three to six hour inservice staff members often do not complete longer inservice evaluations.

The information obtained from this type of evaluation, along with individual comments from staff, build the base for the next phase of inservice planning, that of the transition to application.

The Transition to Application

It is at this phase that the role of the supervisor is the most critical. First, for there to be a transition there must be something to transfer. The choice of a relevant topic at the design phase and the completion of adequate pre-planning at the presentation phase assures the supervisor of having this something.

The plan for the transfer must focus on behavior change for the school psychologist. The supervisor has several strategies that he can rely on to accomplish this goal of behavior change. Two different models are described here. The first model allows the development of a plan that involves an entire team from one specific school. The team's members could be the school psychologist, a teacher, principal, guidance counselor, and other special education support staff, depending on the topic and its relationship to those involved. This team's goal is to obtain the new information, adapt it to their team's function, practice it in the school setting, readapt based on practice experience, and demonstrate and provide feedback for the total school staff.

The supervisor's role is to establish an environment that allows the time and flexibility for the series of meetings that would be needed, to facilitate communication between the presenter and the team members, and to assist in maintaining administrative support from the LEA and AEA.

A second model for the transition to application takes into consideration the need to individualize certain types of inservice. It is important to acknowledge the limits of any form of group inservice. One of these limits is that any given topic will not be relevant to all school psychologists attending an inservice. We currently rely on various other sources for inservice beyond our own agency's program. The survey of school psychology supervisors indicate that, although school psychology staff rely primarily on inservice provided by the agency, there is a close secondary dependence on state, regional, and national conferences and workshops. The survey shows that AEA's across the state have been very supportive of this type of inservice and training. An example is that a preschool psychologist may depend more on regional or national conferences than on local inservice programs for this specific area of concentration, because only one or two staff work in that area.

Even these are not always adequate or financially viable and therefore a system of individualized inservice packages developed by the staff person and supervisor is needed.

> "... the practice of school psychology requires an emphasis on self-supervision of professional growth, as school psychologists often function in isolation from other school psychologists and supervision is usually limited..." (Rosenfield, 1981, p. 487).

Rosenfield sees the development of a self-managed learning model in the practicum course that focuses on developing a contract, formulation of goals tailored to their specific individually perceived knowledge and skill gaps, and an evaluation process to measure progress.

A version of this could be adapted to the inservice needs of the staff school psychologist and expectations of the school psychology supervisor. The primary role of the supervisor in this is to provide support to enhance the probability that the school psychologist will reach the established goals. This support could take the form of: reimbursement of specific costs, flexibility for scheduling and time factors, monitoring the evaluation of the achievement of stated goals,and review of any outcome data or product. Since not all staff are committed to life long learning that is self monitored, the supervisor must realistically balance the frequency of use of this model and individual staff needs.

The two models presented provide a framework for supervisor's to develop unique inservice programs that not only broaden the staffs' access to inservice but promote application in the schools.

Summary

Various limitations exist within the structure of the educational systems and these limitations can pose roadblocks to the growth and development of a viable inservice program. Some of the most commonly viewed difficulties fall within the following categories: (1) the increased cost of financing presenters, (2) time taken away from direct service, (3) staff attitudes, (4) inservices are often only an overview and not in-depth.

The survey of Iowa school psychology supervisors suggests alternative methods that address some of the impact of these limitations. The workshop replication model used in Iowa by the Department of education in which selected staff are trained to replicate a workshop to a whole staff have been successful. Videotaped workshops have also been successful. Closer coordination of information on inservice needs across AEA's could result in sharing expenses for inservice presenters.

Both allowing or encouraging professional staff to spend time with other school psychologists who have the target skills and promoting strong staff participation in the presentation of inservice topics may reduce costs and provide more in-depth and practical skill development. The understandable concern of time taken away from direct service is best approached by varying the schedule of inservice to late afternoon, early evening and weekends to reduce the impact on direct service. More often the potential of positive change must be weighed against this direct service issue and a mutual decision agreed upon among supervisor, administration and staff.

The limitation of staff attitudes is best addressed by having an effective method of measuring staff needs. The use of an inservice committee that monitors staff input may assure that individual inservice needs are being met. Inservice techniques that promote staff interaction such as case study reviews, reviews of journals and tests, and offering more than one choice of inservice topics during a designated inservice day provide a variety that effects staff attitudes in a positive manner.

Sometimes inservices are not in-depth and only an overview to a topic may just be a fact of life for certain inservices, based on the diversity of school psychology staff and the different levels of skill development in areas such as computer usage, observation, adaptive behavior, etcetera. The individualized package for self management on an inservice topic may be a viable solution for this dilemma. Inservice formats do have clear limits and are not by their nature substitutes for all other forms of professional development.

Thus, the best thing that inservice training has going for it is the opportunity it provides for school psychology staff to spend time with other professionals and engage in self-directed learning to the benefit of the students they serve, their colleagues, and themselves.

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Best Practices in Personnel Evaluation

Ron Jordan

AEA 9

Abstract

This chapter examines the evaluation of school psychologists as a function of supervisory responsibility and opportunity. Current models of evaluation processes are reviewed, and a rationale for a comprehensive system is presented. Some unique problems are discussed and suggestions for overcoming these difficulties are provided.

Introduction

The topic of personnel evaluation has long been a subject of controversy among those in human helping professions. This is, perhaps, a result of the highly subjective nature of the process of assigning judgment to services delivered (Rafal, 1980). In many areas of management, accountability and quality of work may be assessed in terms of number of products produced, number of new clients, or increase in sales; the evaluation of school psychologists must rely largely on intangible data. Historically, however, many school psychologists have been evaluated primarily through the use of enumerative data (Sandoval and Lambert, 1977). The number of cases processed and the length of psychological reports are only a small part of professional accountability, and in terms of the impact on consumers of school psychological services, probably the least important.

The monitoring and evaluation of personnel providing school psychological services is an essential component of supervision, but one to which little literature has been directed. Most supervisors have either been left to their own devices to invent evaluation systems and instruments, or have been directed in these endeavors by other (often non-school psychologist) administrators. Over time systems have evolved and have become traditional, even static. Supervisors, and staff psychologists alike, have accepted certain systems as functional, albeit not ideal, with regard to ongoing professional development. Especially as school psychologists expand their role and function, close scrutiny in evaluating these expanded services must not be ignored.

Many school psychologists are intimidated by the processes which evaluate them and the services they provide (Kush and Duncan, 1985). This is unfortunate, yet understandable. Expectations differ between agencies, differ with the training one has received, and the unique perspective one brings to the profession. The perceived threat of evaluation may be compounded by uncertain funding status, changing administrative direction, and increased public interest in accountability in education. The myriad pressures these factors bring to bear on supervisors complicate the task significantly.

Another difficult issue is that of combining performance appraisal andstaff development. The basic dilemma of the personnel evaluation process is how to meet the school psychologist's need for performance feedback and the agency's need to develop both the individual and the total department. While most school psychologists have strong desires to improve their knowledge base and service delivery, defensiveness as a result of negative feedback may impede the open, two-way dialogue necessary for valid information exchange and effective future development. Thus, as a supervisor, the roles of "judge" and "coach" may not be entirely compatible as they are frequently practiced (Beer, 1981). The end result of this conflict may be that one aspect of the appraisal is relied on almost exclusively, with little or no consideration given the other, equally important, factors. Reluctance to evaluate is not an uncommon reaction, although most supervisors endorse the benefits of employee evaluation (Grensing, 1985).

Clarification is needed regarding philosophy, purpose, responsibility, methods, and outcomes. The remainder of this chapter is devoted to an examination of current practices and considerations for future direction. Guidelines are offered toward a goal of comprehensive evaluation of school psychologists, while avoiding many common pitfalls. Organizational and personal needs and goals need not be incompatible.

Current Practice

In an effort to establish a context for current practices in personnel evaluation, the supervisors of school psychological services in Iowa's fifteen Area Education Agencies were surveyed. The survey requested copies of evaluation instruments, a description of procedures utilized, comments regarding requirements in collective bargaining agreements which may impact on evaluation of staff, and comments relative to each supervisor's (or agency's) philosophical orientation. Among the surveys and materials returned there exists a wide range of responses reflective of extremely variable philosophical bases and judgement criteria, as well as differences in the formality of the actual process. Each agency varies greatly in terms of geographic size, size of staff, population demographics, and administrative and supervisory direction and the variability observed reinforces the multitude of influences to be dealt with in this issue.

Evaluation instruments and forms currently in use range from a single open-ended page to numerous, many-item questionnaires to be completed by several sources. Among the least formal and least complicated is a process in which the supervisor simply meets with the school psychologist, discusses issues and goals, then summarizes the outcome of the meeting. In this process, the only persons involved are the individual psychologist and his or her supervisor. There appears to be no specific criteria upon which judgments are based. Among the more formal processes is a set of instruments soliciting and perceptions of consumers such as building principals and classroom teachers regarding the quality of services received. Other more formal systems include self-evaluation as a component. Several processes include direct observation by the supervisor, and in all cases the supervisor completes the final summary.

Descriptions of procedures were as variable as the instruments utilized. Several indicated very straight forward and informal meetings with the staff member as being the major procedural component. At the other end of the continuum, a few agencies have very detailed, often contractually required, procedures that must be followed with timelines assigned to activities.

There were no instances in which supervisors indicated that the requirements of collective bargaining agreements had any positive or negative impact upon functional personnel evaluation. In one agency, the instrument used for summarizing performance of school psychologists is the same as that used for all disciplines (i.e. social workers, consultants, speech clinicians, and others). This evaluation instrument was termed "cumbersome" by the supervisor.

While few supervisors elected to comment on personal or agency orientation, those who did respond were highly consistent. These responses were of the singular belief that the process of personnel evaluation should be strictly one of positive reinforcement for the expressed purpose of individual and staff development.

Constructing summary statements regarding the forms and formats is difficult. They are consistently inconsistent in most respects. There are, however, a few commonalities. In all cases, school psychologists are supervised and evaluated by persons trained in school psychology. In all cases, personnel evaluation is conducted with specified regularity, although the frequency and intervals vary widely. There were no instances in which input was sought from parents as consumers. There were no instances in which peer review exists as an evaluation component. In general, there is little inter-agency agreement relative to staff expectations reflected in evaluation processes. Perhaps the only identifiable trend among the respondents is the notion that personnel evaluation should be viewed only in the context of a forum for positive feedback and future growth.

While this positive posture is certainly an attractive position to assume, it seems somewhat unrealistic. Seldom are we faced with the "model" school psychologist or with the polar opposite, the "total failure". Instead, school psychologists display a variety of strengths and weaknesses as individuals making it impractical and unfair to adhere to a rigidly narrow perspective. There were no concerns evidenced in the survey regarding "marginal" psychologists or potential terminations. Is this not an area which personnel evaluation addresses? Certainly negative appraisals with specified remedial requirements may serve to alienate staff members and cause tension between psychologists and supervisors, but it cannot assume that problems will ameliorate themselves nor that this is a process outside the realm of our responsibility.

By definition, the term "evaluation" means "to judge or determine the worth or quality of". If supervisors are to aid in the future development of the profession of school psychology, they cannot afford to shirk the responsibility of legitimately assessing our own ranks. With current trends in increased accountability, supervisors must be sensitive to responding with greater efficiency. Mandates require comprehensive evaluations for children, yet those responsible for these evaluations are not bound by the same requirements. Within a comprehensively developed framework the evaluation of school psychologists, and the services they provide, can enhance personal and professional growth as well as assist in eliminating inefficient practices.

Prior to offering suggestions regarding the approach to a comprehensive system of evaluation, it is relevant to discuss some of the typical difficulties encountered by supervisors when involved in performance appraisal. In any evaluatory procedure, the possibility for error exists. The following rating errors are some that supervisors should be particularly cautious to avoid (Grensing, 1985).

1. **The Halo Effect.** This term refers to a supervisor's tendency to rate all aspects of performance based on the observation of one trait. For example, if a psychologist is observed to be meticulous and thorough in testing, the tendency would be to rate him or her high on all characteristics.

2. **The Horn Effect.** The opposite of the halo effect, the horn effect refers to a supervisor's tendency to let one poor rating influence all other rating areas, resulting in an overall evaluation that is lower than deserved.

3. **Error of Central Tendency.** This describes the tendency of the supervisor to cluster appraisals around a central point. This results from the fear of rating too high or too low. It may seem safer to cluster all scores toward the center to lend greater "validity" to the evaluation.

4. **Latest Behavior.** There is a distinct tendency to focus only on recent performance, and to ignore past problems or accomplishments. This problem is most likely when evaluations are infrequent or spaced at long intervals.

5. **Leniency or Generosity Error.** This group involves high ratings for most staff members, possibly because of a reluctance to "rock the boat" by seeming too critical. A harried supervisor may find it much easier and certainly more pleasant to offer unconditional praise to a school psychologist, than to document instances of substandard performance.

6. **Strictness.** The opposite of leniency, this is the tendency to be overly critical when evaluating staff.

7. **Stereotyping or Initial Impression.** Stereotypes may be either conscious or subconscious, and are very difficult to overcome. It is extremely important to base any evaluation on observable, objective behaviors rather than subjective opinions.

8. **Projection or Similarity Error.** An error of this type can occur because a supervisor finds that a psychologist "reminds me of myself a few years ago" or that "they just don't have the motivation I have". Artificially high or low evaluations can easily be the result.

9. **Spillover Error.** Allowing past evaluations, either positive or negative, to reflect on the current rating, even though actual performance has not been the same.

10. **Inter-individual Error.** This error is made by basing each psychologist's evaluation on a comparison with others. This can be especially unfair since one staff member may have received very high ratings because of favorable circumstances rather than actual performances.

The evaluation process is, by its very nature, quite subjective, leaving many areas open to bias and error. Before conducting personnel evaluations, it is very important to consider several points which help make a difficult task more manageable (Grensing, 1985).

1. Be prepared.

2. Clarify standards among staff. Make certain that expectations and criteria for judgment are understood.

3. Identify desired performance areas in observable terms, insofar as possible.

4. Keep a running log of each psychologist's performance to review before formal evaluation. This helps to avoid the possibility of the "latest behavior" error.

5. Be aware of personal biases and work to overcome them. Be cautious of overcompensation, however.

6. Use more than one source of input and compare results to determine and avoid possible biases.

7. Do not assume excellence in one area implies excellence in all areas. Observe each psychologist's performance objectively for each criteria.

8. Base judgments on demonstrated performance, not on anticipated performance.

9. Base judgments on written, observable standards, not on a comparison with other psychologists.

10. Conclude each evaluation with a summary and a plan for the future.

To meet the goal of comprehensive personnel evaluation, there are a number of factors and components to be considered. In order to facilitate effective evaluation, the underlying philosophy must be broad in scope. A philosophy should allow for a process oriented toward staff development, performance improvement, accountability, and information to be potentially utilized in disciplinary. While several of these areas may seem in conflict with each other, they may be successfully blended within the same process with careful consideration. The ultimate goal is to determine the quality of a school psychological staff and the individual members of that staff (Maher and Barbrack, 1981). It should also serve as a form of needs assessment, in terms of strategies for improving services to consumers.

There are, in a general sense, three types of evaluative data to be collected: enumerative data, process data, and outcome data (LaGuardia, et al, 1986). Enumerative data is essentially data reflective of tallies of various activities. Counts are made of numbers of tests, numbers of reports, numbers of conferences, and so forth. The problem with frequency counts is that they do not reflect the relative quality of these activities. Because these kinds of statistics are quickly and easily collected, they continue to be used and do provide one component that is observable (Sandoval and Lambert, 1977). Used in isolation, however, they can be very misleading.

Process data refers to such things as efficiency, communication skills, sensitivity and knowledge base. These are the areas that most school psychologists are interested in with regard to feedback, yet they tend to be the most subjective to actually rate. Possibly the most effective means of collecting this type of information is via the use of rating scales or questionnaires. If or administrator's ratings are viewed collectively with those of teachers, parents, students, and others who have regular contact with the psychologist, these data have validity and merit.

Outcome data refers to result oriented information and is perhaps the most difficult to collect and analyze. Certainly some types of outcome data are readily available and observable, if one considers reports and other documentation as result oriented. However, true results in terms of changes brought about in children's learning and/or behavior are much more difficult to quantify or qualify. Certain follow-up activities may gain some insight into this type of data and ultimately pay dividends in the larger sense of a psychologist's effectiveness in a role. Again, one must frequently rely on second-hand information, which may or may not be objective. It is also not entirely fair to place a great deal of emphasis upon student change data, as there are many problems associated with standards and expectations in this area.

The ideas presented above provide background for consideration when developing a comprehensive personnel evaluation system. Recognizing that the "state of the art" reflects less than precise measurement of performance, and that agencies, supervisors, and psychologists differ, specific suggestions relative to instrumentation are deferred in favor of an overview of recommended techniques. Sandoval and Lambert (1977) provide examples of data collection devices which may be helpful in developing actual instrumentation. The following discussion focuses on components considered as beneficial in the process of staff evaluation.

At the outset, and prior to establishing a formal system of procedures, input from the individual psychologists to be evaluated should be solicited. To the extent that evaluation can, and should, result in a mutual sharing of ideas and goals, the psychologist's perceptions of standards and criteria are invaluable. This collaborative process also lends a dimension of "ownership" by the psychologists which makes the system more meaningful and credible (LaGuardia, et al, 1986).

Collaboration with other supervisors, when possible, is also a recommended tool. Others who deal with the same tasks and responsibilities often bring reinforcement as well as unique perspectives. The sharing of instrumentation, methods, successes, and failures allows for growth that is difficult to achieve independently.

Solicitation of input from a variety of consumer groups is highly recommended. Ideally, the psychologist should be evaluated by the impact of services on children. This is difficult to document, and typically must be gained through sources other than direct observation. By surveying principals, teachers, parents, colleagues, and, when appropriate, students, data may be combined and considered collectively. This data provides a cross-section of perceptions and opinions and begin to provide valid information. There is a methodological problem associated with this technique. It is seldom practical to gain evaluative data from every possible source. Therefore, perhaps the best option in obtaining a reasonable sample is to select randomly from those consumers with whom the psychologist has had at least several contacts (Sandoval and Lambert, 1977).

Direct observation of the school psychologist is a component which should not be overlooked. The physical viewing of the staff member conducting selected activities, in a variety of settings, provides the supervisor with the direct opportunity to determine the quality of such things as communication skills, counseling skills, sensitivity, accuracy of interpretation, and so forth. One method which is helpful in putting the psychologist at ease with this technique is to request that he or she select some of the activities to be observed. Another method which is reported to be quite successful is to simply accompany the psychologist in his or her daily routines and tasks on several successive days (LaGuardia, et al, 1986). While this particular technique may be somewhat intrusive, it does provide for comprehensive observational opportunities.

A thorough review of each psychologist's written documentation provides another facet of functioning is useful in terms of assessing written communication effectiveness, as well as accountability efficiency.

Review by colleagues is an aspect of evaluation that is frequently ignored. The NASP Standards for the Provision of School Psychological Services suggest peer review as an appropriate component of ongoing professional growth (NASP, 1984). Correll, McElwain, and Iffert-Jacobson (1986) suggest that peer review be initiated and implemented by and for the psychologists involved. Their concept is one in which the psychologists participate voluntarily, and separately from any supervisory input or feedback. In this way, confidentiality is maintained and professional growth is enhanced. Kush and Duncan (1985) suggest the observation of test administration as an area which lends itself to objective appraisal by peers. While these peer review activities are not directly supervisory in nature, certainly supervisors may be involved in encouraging their development and facilitating the process.

Somewhat akin to the involvement of psychologists in determining what instruments and methods are to be used in their evaluation is the concept of self-evaluation. By requesting that the school psychologist complete an evaluation instrument rating his or her own performance, several issues are revealed. This lends itself well to discussion of self-perception, greater understanding of standards and criteria, and better goal setting (Beer, 1981).

The use of personnel evaluation as a process of setting and monitoring goals is quite widespread, possibly because it affords the bypassing of judgment and criticism. Needs-based goal setting, with follow-up on attainment, is a valid technique for evaluating individual psychologists and psychological service departments alike (Maher and Barbarack, 1981). Goal setting can be a positive vehicle for meaningful dialogue between psychologist and supervisor, and is most effective when mutually developed. Goal-based evaluation can produce excellent results in terms of staff growth and development, but, as with any method or technique, should not be relied upon as a sole evaluatory tool.

Conferences between psychologist and supervisor throughout the formal evaluation process facilitate communication and avoid misunderstandings. A pre-evaluation conference serves to clarify the upcoming process, determine what activities are to take place, and provides an opportunity to schedule direct observations. This conference also allows the psychologist to provide input relative to any areas which he or she wishes the supervisor to emphasize. A mid-evaluation conference is helpful in reviewing progress of the evaluation, and to make any necessary changes with regard to schedule conflicts. A post-evaluation conference, to review the formalized summary and to discuss future goals, is essential. The school psychologist should have the option of rebuttal, in the event that differences in perception become evident.

A further option to be considered, in an effort to avoid the supervisor's role being both "judge" and "coach", is that of separating the concepts of evaluation and development. This may be accomplished by establishing two separate personnel evaluations for each psychologist: one which focuses on performance appraisal and another which focuses on coaching and development. Such a split recognizes that supervisors may have difficulty in executing these roles without the behavior required by one role interfering with the behavior required by the other. If this model is followed, there should be two distinct sets of instruments developed and the two evaluations held at different times during the year to further reinforce the uncoupling of roles (Beer, 1981).

Summary and Implications

While certainly not all-inclusive, the concepts presented above are intended to stimulate ideas and further possibilities when considering a model for the comprehensive evaluation of school psychologists. Comprehensive personnel evaluation is, in some respects, analogous to the comprehensive evaluation of students, in that data of a variety of types is gathered from a variety of sources. It falls to the supervisor to analyze, interpret, and summarize the information into a plan for future improvement, not unlike an I.E.P.

The roles required of supervisors in this process are many, but the problems are not insurmountable. Successful staff evaluation demands a delicate blend of assertiveness and sensitivity, combined with a careful measure of planning. Judging behavior is far more difficult than judging a tangible product. The perfect evaluation system has not been developed, primarily because no one has yet been able to factor out human error. The supervisor's responsibility in personnel evaluation is to develop and implement a functional system which includes a compatible mixture of concrete goals and behavioral assessments.

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Maher, C. A. (1979). Guidelines for Planning and Evaluating School Psychology Service Delivery Systems. Journal of School Psychology, 17, 203-212.

Contemporary standards of professional practice and educational compliance legislation emphasize the delivery of appropriate school psychological services. This article sets forth guidelines so that school psychologists and supervisors may consider and adapt them to local circumstances.

Maher, C. A. & Braback, C. R. (1981). An Approach to Goal-Based Evaluation of School Psychological Service Departments. Psychology In The Schools, 18, 309-315.

This article discusses concerns among school psychologists for evaluating goal attainment of their services. It describes an approach for goal-based evaluation of school psychological service departments, termed "Needs-Based Goal Attainment Scaling".

Sandoval, J. & Lambert, N. M. (1977). Instruments for Evaluating School Psychologists' Functioning and Service. Psychology In The Schools, 14, 172-179.

This paper describes and presents examples of five data collection devices which can be used in the evaluation effort: the vignette-based questionnaire, the services received questionnaire, the teacher interview, the role-model questionnaire, and nonobtrusive measurement.

Best Practices in

Staff Morale, Spirit and Comradery

Thomas Ciha
AEA 9

Abstract

The factors that differentiate between a good staff and a great staff many times can be related to attitude and morale. There is no one magic formula. Instead, there are a collection of best practices that must be matched to meet the personalities of both the supervisor and the supervisee. This chapter will examine the practices that contribute to high morale and resultant peak efficiency.

Introduction

Many years ago I said that an effective leader "leads". One does not impose their will on others. I still believe that statement. People primarily work to please themselves, for positive recognition from others, and further, that the **primary other** is their leader. So, if one believes my premise, it follows that people will work for encouragement, recognition and praise from their leader more effectively than they will respond to regulations, rules, harsh parameters and fear of reprimands.

One can assume that leadership style affects staff morale; but, it is difficult to identify those leadership traits that promote high morale. Leaders can describe what they do in the recruitment process or the personnel evaluation process; but, when asked to delineate what it is in their leadership style that contributes to peak morale and high spirits, most leaders are vague. Those leaders who promote high morale are aware that they do - and they know they have <u>it</u> in their leadership style. They just can't define what <u>it</u> is. On the other hand, there are those supervisors and leaders who can't define <u>it</u> because they don't have <u>it</u>. Staff morale, spirit and comradery are a low priority in their leadership hierarchy and their staff morale tends to be low. Although there are many variables that serve to affect morale, good morale will be determined by the leadership stance and style of the supervisor.

Over the last several decades, school psychologists have utilized all sorts of approaches to problem solving and managing behavior. These approaches have ranged from "T" groups to "M & M's". I suggest a "B & B" approach to staff management. This is the Buffer-Booster approach. Almost all school psychology supervisors are middle managers. This is also the case in Iowa. As such, all must deal with both those people and situations above and below them in the chain of command. They have the same good chances for success as the master juggler; they'll drop one now and then, but, hopefully, not often.

Let's review some situations that come to you from your supervisor or supervisees:

I. Your supervisor

A. "I'm going to paint the worst scenario - This probably won't happen, but your people should be prepared. If it doesn't happen, they'll be relieved."

B. "Next week, I'm proposing to the Governing Board that we merge your two offices and move to a central location equidistant (20 miles) from where everyone is now."

II. Your supervisee

A. "I hate to call in the middle of the night - but I'm in trouble. It's a mess...and, and, I didn't want you to hear this from anyone else...."

B. "I don't know exactly how to put this, but, there are remarks that someone on our Staff is involved in a pretty immoral situation. I don't like it. Please do something!"

All of these examples require responsible action on the part of the middle management supervisor for the unique importance of each situation. Perhaps more importantly, each situation has the potential to destroy staff morale and spirit. The Buffer-Booster approach may be needed. For example, as supervisor, you have a responsibility to your staff to convey bad news as well as good, and you need to prepare them for any imposing threats to their security and well being. But, be a Buffer, by tempering the situation with your own interpretations and predictions of outcome. You Boost morale by sharing whatever hopes there may be and foster a solidarity that might not have been there prior to the "bad news scenarios".

Likewise, with the two staff situations, as middle management, you could take those right to the top. That could take some of the weight of responsibility off your back. However it would be better to treat that information like any well trained psychologist handling confidential client information. If the information is a threat to that person or others, it's mandatory to report it; if not Buffer and Boost. If your actions serve to destroy the professional posture of a member of your staff, then the colleagues will doubt your professionalism and healthy morale will be history.

There are countless other examples of situations that require wise and sensitive response from the Supervisor. It is important to sort out the big things from the little things. When we use our psychological skill to advise parents or deal with our own children, we consistently advocate never making threats which we cannot keep. Sometimes, it is necessary to ignore the inconsequential in favor of the major issues. Unfortunately, many supervisors tend to forget this philosophical tenet as they refuse permission for a supervisee to pick up his mother at the airport an hour before the office closes, (even though they know that the same employee donated two personal hours the night before on a PTA panel). The decision reinforces consistency in adhering to agency policy; but, what does it do for morale? Are we going to demand five reports a week from a psychologist who, prior to now, has been able to do one per week. As with parenting, not only can we not enforce unrealistic expectancies, they are demoralizing for everyone.

There are obvious factors that contribute to the overall level of morale, e.g., salary, location, working conditions. It is this author's contention, however, that it is the leadership style of the supervisor, that, in spite of all the other factors, will determine the level of staff morale and spirit.

Murphy (1981) states that perhaps the most important and most difficult responsibility of the supervisor is to set the tone for the unit.

> "The staff tend to scrutinize supervisor behaviors for reflections of attitudes and beliefs of the supervisor concerning service to children, parents, teachers, and school administrators. If the supervisor treats guidelines and standards as painful necessities, the staff will follow. If the supervisor always attempts to mollify administrators in the "good ole boy" tradition, the staff will follow. If the supervisor dictates policy and provides total direction to his staff, they will tend to adopt a similar model in their work with colleagues and clients. However, if the supervisor attempts to surpass minimal guidelines and work toward a best practices model of service provision, the staff will strive for excellence and quality. If the supervisor behaves in a manner indicative of the belief that education should serve children, the staff will strive to meet childrens' needs, even when they collide with those of administrators. Finally, if the supervisor adopts the attitude that each staff member has the skills and knowledge to make major contributions to the psychological service unit, then the staff will relate to team members in the school in like manner. In no way is it possible to preach one philosophy and practice another and be an effective supervisor. Not only will the professional attitudes of the supervisor affect the staff, but the personal attitudes will also have a major impact on the group."

If the supervisor behaves in the manner suggested by Murphy, the striving for excellence and quality will take place. This striving will not be to emulate the supervisor, but to meet the expectancies and recognition of the supervisor. What cannot be denied in Murphy's discourse on supervision is that the supervisor creates the proper climate. Once that climate is created, the supervisor can go about improving and honing other supervisory skills; and, staff members can concentrate on mastering their skills. Staff morale will be high.

If the supervisor sets the tone and the climate is healthy, there will be peak production. If the climate is unhealthy and the morale is low, communications will break down and the system is prey to the destructive "games" played by both supervisors and supervisees. Petersen (1981) poignantly describes these games and maladaptive communications: "Games are initiated by both supervisors and supervisees in an attempt to minimize losses and maximize gains in the supervisory relationship."

One only needs to review the supervision desires of practitioners (Bowser, 1981; Robinson, 1981; Yanowitz, 1981) to be cognizant of the overwhelming needs of practitioners. For example:

Bowser: "All the supervisor has to do is obtain top performance from the staff!"

"Does the supervisor tell the staff what they are doing correctly? What reinforcement systems are used?"

Yanowitz: "I would employ a supervisor who would set aside uninterrupted time for staff members to privately and confidentially discuss matters of concern."

"I want the supervisor to keep in close touch with staff to monitor their performance, not only seeking out staff when there is a problem so that they learn to dread her call."

"The supervisor should maintain her belief that by working together she and her staff may overcome adversitie

"The supervisor must feel qualified and secure in her own position so that she is not threatened by the achievements of individuals on her staff. She should make a concerted effort to recognize and reinforce special accomplishments through such means as personal letters of commendation, announcements at staff meetings, and articles in district, community and professional publications."

"Such a supervisor should provide an atmosphere which would encourage the continued personal, educational and professional growth of her staff."

Robinson: "To achieve departmental cohesion, supervisors must have the ability to manage the differing personalities of the practitioners on their staff, considering each practitioner's strengths and weaknesses, years of experience, areas of interest, and their attitudes toward constructive criticism and administrative directives."

"Though we can learn valuable lessons from some of our less successful experiences, supervisors must also sense when to guide, assist, or support the novice school psychologist, or conversely, directly and firmly insist on alternative courses of action. Acceptance of these supervisory directives can occur only after rapport has been established."

"Finally, it would be quite selfish of supervisors if, after becoming acquainted through discussions, observations, and evaluations with the strengths of individual staff members, they did not establish a vehicle for sharing those strengths with staff as a whole."

Further, practitioners expect that the supervisor should meet their needs. One is moved to agree with Bowser, "Are you sure you want to go into school psychology supervision?"

What do the items on those wish lists demand? They demand specific skills of course; but, they also demand a leadership style that promotes trust, communication and a desire to excel. It is leadership stance and style that will set the tone, create the proper climate, and ensure high morale.

Current Practice

To assess the current state of the art in Iowa, I adapted some of the concepts of Hersey and Blanchard (1977). Their stance is that leaders create climate, that leaders have interpersonal relationships with subordinates, and that it's what your subordinates think you're doing that sets the tone and the climate. They choose to define management as working with and through individuals and groups to accomplish organizational goals, with a strong emphasis on interpersonal skills. Drawing from scientific management with its emphasis on the needs of the organization, and human relations management, with its emphasis on individual needs, personal growth and development, they constructed a situational leadership quandrant to define leadership styles.

It was this type of didactic thinking that influenced my questionnaire addressed to practicing school psychology supervisors across the state of Iowa (See Appendix A). I was interested in examining the obvious factors we commonly think would have the most impact on staff morale, as well as leadership style of the supervisor. Also, I wanted to know what actions the supervisor consciously initiated to sustain or improve staff morale.

Without exception all supervisors commented that they had personal difficulty prioritizing the items in the first question dealing with overall contributors to staff morale. With twelve out of fourteen supervisors responding, only one gave salary a first place ranking. Seven gave job expectancy a first place ranking. An item analysis revealed that School Psychology Supervisors in the State of Iowa prioritized these morale contributors in the following order:

1. Job Expectancy
2. Total Staff Makeup
3. Salary
4. Geographic Location
5. Community Values
6. Physical Facilities

More enlightening, however, are some of the comments the supervisors made in response to this question. My favorite response from an Iowa colleague was, "I can only guess at this question, because our salaries and facilities are lousy, but our morale tends to be high!" The supervisor has the IT referred to earlier. Another Iowa colleague, after crossing out and reprioritizing, stated, "I think the group leader can probably overcome most negative factors or undermine most positive factors!" It seems obvious what value he places on leadership style and the potential it has for staff morale. A third supervisor concluded, "If the job seems right and the income is survivable, with the proper leadership, everything else seems to fall in place!" Again, it would seem that this leader places a high value on his role in maintaining good morale.

Iowa supervisors of school psychology found it difficult to prioritize the more standard and concrete factors we think should contribute to overall morale. What is clear is that in their perception, it is not the new test kits, the spiffy offices, where you are located, or community values that are important contributing factors.

The second survey question was designed to gain insight into how Iowa supervisors viewed their own leadership style. Interestingly, only one supervisor saw (or admitted) that his leadership style was Authoritarian/Directive. The overwhelming number of Iowa supervisors viewed their leadership style as Relationship Oriented or as a combination of Relationship Oriented and Participatory. In addition, these leaders were confident that their respective staffs would agree with their perceptions. Perhaps the most thoughtful response was from a supervisor who sensed that he utilized all three approaches depending upon the situation, but projected that his emphasis was always relationship oriented. The elaborative comments on these two questions relating to leadership style certainly confirm the value Iowa School Psychology Supervisors place on leadership style as it affects morale. I also found some words to help me identify IT (the style of that ideal leader who leads effectively) from a supervisor who described his own leadership style as "utilizing a positive coaching style that encourages independence."

The remainder of the survey of Iowa School Psychology supervisors was devoted to identifying the more specific kinds of actions leaders did to enhance staff morale. The responses to those questions defy any clear-cut statistical analysis, but there were some remarkable commonalities and similarity of approach. The two most pervading themes centered around, 1) maintaining consistent, personal two way communication, and 2) giving positive feedback to individual staff persons. Given whatever emphasis, these two items surfaced from virtually all the respondents in one form or another. There is no doubt that effective communication and positive reinforcement are seen as essential to the maintenance of high morale by the school psychology supervisors in Iowa.

The majority of supervisors believe that to enhance morale, the supervisor had to demonstrate both a personal and professional interest in the staff person. From simple comments like, "You must show your people that you care about them and their success both off and on the job!" to more cautious comments, such as, "I try to show a real interest in staff people off the job while still maintaining the boundaries of a professional relationship", you know that supervisors see this type of relationship as an important, yet delicate, ingredient for maintaining high staff morale.

Another leadership stance surfaced that I would group under the title, "Staff encouragement, evaluating for the purpose of growth and development, and mutual goal writing". While utilizing various approaches and models, many supervisors felt that an essential factor to enhancing morale was to establish a vehicle by which the supervisor became personally involved in helping the staff person set personal and professional goals. It would appear that if the process is successful, it brings rewards to both the supervisor and the supervisee, and thus, morale is enhanced.

Also noteworthy were those supervisors who recognized the expertise and talent on their own staffs and they utilized this talent. In some agencies that took the form of merely recognizing "the expert status of certain staff persons" and encouraging inter-staff referral to them, e.g., the expert researcher,the psychologist well versed in personality assessment, the behavioral programmer. In other agencies, it was common practice to have a number of inservice training programs each year arranged and presented by the staff members themselves. What better way to recognize the expertise of staff.

There were many "special" kinds of things that supervisors in Iowa report that they do, on a regular or one time basis, specifically planned to enhance staff spirit and to promote comradery. Almost all attest to doing the expected social things from hosting formal cocktail parties to family picnics. Some more creative supervisors develop slogans, logos, or T-shirts. One enterprising supervisor I know created John A. Doe, School Psychologist. John is a fictitious, but very active staff member who has his own office in the broom closet. I can personally attest to John's professional zeal as it was I who signed his NASP membership certificate. John's collection of professional memorabilia, contributed to regularly by every member of that staff, raises the spirit and comradery of visitor and staff person alike.

Some supervisors relate that they schedule regular staff meetings outside the office (in public places or in a staff member's home) with great morale boosting results. Still others promote public relations/ awareness activities that put their staff in the limelight. Some make it a practice to have lunch alone with each staff member at least once each year. Special recognition at banquets, board meetings, and in the press seem to all be sure spirit boosters.

In preparation for writing this chapter, I took the risk of surveying my present staff utilizing a modified version of the questionnaire (See Appendix B). Their responses to the questions were very similar to those of the supervisors. Although this was a small sample, it makes me believe that supervisor and supervisee are very much aware of the things to do to promote a high morale level.

Summary and Implications

A supervisor with a positive leadership style "leads" rather than "imposes". You must posses a "positive coaching style that encourages independence"; you must be a "cheerleader", always there to yell, encourage and support the team; and you must employ a B & B approach. It is essential to **Buffer** and **Boost**. You must take the risk of finding that fine line between too close and too distant, with the courage to know that you may one day step over the line. You must feel qualified and secure in your own position so that you can be proud and not threatened by the

achievements of your staff. You must be unselfish and share the individual strengths of staff members with the whole group. Only the leader can set the tone and create the climate that will result in HIGH MORALE AND PEAK PERFORMANCE. That is IT in a positive Leadership Style. Try IT! Want to bet if IT works?

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Operations of a Staff without a Designated Supervisor

Jens B. Simonsen

AEA 13

Abstract

A model for the operation of a school psychology department in an intermediate service agency without a discipline-specific supervisor is presented. In this model, two or more staff members maintain discipline-specific leadership responsibilities, whereas a special education administrator assumes the administrative responsibilities previously held by the supervisor of school psychologists. Suggestions for improvement of the model, such as inclusion of peer review and peer support groups are given.

Introduction

In the State of Iowa, most Area Education Agencies (AEA's) have a designated supervisor of psychological services. The supervisor is a certified (and often licensed) psychologist, who is intricately familiar with the role of the school psychologist and shares the background and experience of the psychologists on staff. However, this does not hold true across the nation. For example, an informal survey taken at the 1986 National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) conference indicated that probably less than fifty percent of all school psychologists are supervised by someone with a background in school psychology. This situation poses a number of serious questions for the profession of school psychology, including:

- o How to maintain a professional atmosphere and encourage continued professional growth?
- o How to maintain a high standard in relation to the quality of work performed by the psychologists on staff?
- o How to gather and disseminate professional information to the staff?
- o How to supervise and train interns?
- o How to maintain staff morale?
- o How to conduct recruitment of new psychologists?
- o How to administratively evaluate the performance of the psychologists on staff?

These and other questions will be addressed as a model is presented for discipline supervision without a designated supervisor.

Current Practice

In most AEA's across the state, the role of the supervisor of school psychology is a combination of administrative duties and discipline-related duties. Administrative duties generally include participation in the decision making process of the upper level administration in areas such as program development, budget allocations and formal evaluation of staff. Staff recruitment is also largely an administrative responsibility carried out by the supervisor. Specific discipline-related responsibilities of the supervisor include staff development and growth, internship supervision and training, collection and dissemination of pertinent professional information, participation in state level activities, such as statewide supervisory meetings, and development of goals and objectives for the discipline and staff in a given AEA. Besides supervisory responsibilities, some of Iowa's school psychology supervisors also have direct service responsibilities, and function as school psychologists, generally with a reduced caseload. In most AEA's the supervisor functions in an area wide capacity and each professional discipline within the AEA has its own supervisor.

One Future Direction

Due to a change in administration of this AEA, a different approach to supervision was developed. The AEA was divided into sectors and an individual credentialed in special education supervision and administration was appointed to assume all administrative responsibilities for that geographic area. Thus, this individual has supervisory responsibilities across disciplines, and functions much like a principal in a school building, who is responsible for all members on his staff. The advantages of this model of supervision are that all AEA staff members refer to one individual for supervisory assistance, and that the schools in this area only have to work with one administrator from the AEA. This model made administration in the AEA more efficient and responsive to the needs of the schools.

However, the sector supervisors have generally been found to have too many administrative duties to adequately assume responsibilities for discipline leadership. For this reason a different model was developed in order to maintain discipline cohesiveness and professionalism.

In this model, the duties of the supervisor previously described as mainly administrative were assumed by the sector supervisor. However, the duties specifically related to the profession of school psychology were assumed by two staff psychologists. One staff member was primarily assigned the responsibilities of organizing regular discipline meetings, development of discipline goals, provision of technical expertise to other psychologists on staff, professional development and inservice for staff psychologists, and the supervision and training of interns and practicum students. The other staff member was responsible for participating in State level activities (such as monthly supervisory meetings), the collection and dissemination of State Department materials to psychologists on staff, and to the AEA administration, and the filing of the annual report to the State Department. Both staff members participated in the recruitment activities and the interviewing of prospective candidates for psychologist positions. It was found that there was a considerable amount of overlap in these roles and a high level of cooperation between these individuals was a needed component of this model. Another important aspect of this model was the voluntary participation of the other psychologists on staff on committees dealing with topics important to the discipline.

This model of discipline leadership has been utilized in this AEA for one year, and appears to have been a good solution to most of the questions posed previously. When evaluating the benefits and liabilities of this model, a number of things come to mind. First, this model allowed continued formal discipline leadership, which is very important in order to maintain the feeling of discipline identity within a large staff. The ability to conduct regular discipline meetings has the important aspects of supporting staff members in their professional growth, discussing professional issues and giving support for maintaining quality services to children. Another significant benefit of this model was the increased reliability on staff members for the development of their discipline. Greater staff participation in discipline issues resulted in a higher level of professionalism and appreciation of our profession in spite of heavy workloads. The school psychology staff also benefited from more participation in decisions made in relation to the discipline. Finally, it was felt that a greater sense of comraderie and cohesiveness was developed within the staff.

On the other hand, this model still has some liabilities, and the most obvious one of these relates to the issue of evaluation of professional competency. The evaluation procedures currently utilized cannot specifically address competency issues in school psychology, as no administrator on staff has a background in school psychology. Many, if not most professional behaviors, can be evaluated by a special education administrator who is not a school psychologist, but the discipline-specific skills cannot. Another liability of this model is the difficulty in reaching staff members who, for one reason or another, choose not to participate in discipline-related inservices and meetings. The psychologists in leadership roles do not have the administrative power to mandate participation. This may not always be a desirable way to reach staff members, but it is a way of including everyone.

This model has been in effect for only one year and for the coming school year, several components will be added to it and some parts will be changed. It has been proposed to divide the leadership roles further, as the role of staff development and internship training was extremely time consuming and difficult to combine with a regular caseload. This role will be assumed by two individuals. One individual will be in charge of inservice training, discipline meetings, etc., and the other individual will assume the responsibilities dealing with the training of students.

Another very important change will be the development of a peer review system for all psychologists on staff. This system will be based on many of the ideas presented by Correll, McElwain and Iffert-Jacobsen (1986). It is hoped that participation in peer reviews will be a way of maintaining quality services to children and a high level of professionalism within the staff. Utilization of a peer review system, although distinctly separate from administrative evaluation, is a way of complementing this evaluation. Peer review is a way of monitoring psychological services from within the discipline and is a desirable way to encourage staff development and growth.

As stated by Sylvia Rosenfield (1981) continued professional development is often haphazard, if not actually without any real benefit to most school psychologists. Commonly, continued professional development consists of participation in inservices, attendance at conventions and workshops, and other activities of this nature. Most school psychologists, however, do not learn enough to be able to utilize the skills described during these presentations. A more viable form of professional development and growth appears to be the peer support group. This group is described by Joseph Zins (1986) and has the ability to strengthen the professionalism and growth of school psychologists who are in the field. In order to improve our model of discipline operation we proposed to include peer support groups as a part of our plan. Further strengths of peer support groups include the ability to discuss and receive professional help from colleagues in relation to cases on which one currently is working, discussions of innovations in the field of psychology and the ability to "vent" frustrations to colleagues who understand.

It is also proposed that the psychologists in leadership positions receive a reduction in their regular caseload in order to be able to spend more time on their additional responsibilities. Finally, an intra-agency task force is currently attempting to develop procedures, which will improve the formal evaluation procedures in this agency.

Summary and Implications

In summary, a model of discipline leadership without a designated supervisor has been presented. In this model, administrative responsibilities formerly carried out by the supervisor were transferred to a special education administrator, and the discipline-specific responsibilities were carried out by psychologists on staff. The staff members in leadership positions were helped considerably by the willingness of the entire school psychology staff to work together for the common goal of improving school psychology services to children. Specific benefits of this model include greater cohesiveness within the school psychology staff, a continued, strong discipline identity and continued professional growth. Potential difficulties with this model relate to evaluation of specific professional skills and problems reaching staff members who chose to isolate themselves. Some ways to improve the model were suggested. Peer review and peer support groups were seen as important components to be included in the model for the next school year.

Finally, if someone would choose to develop a system of discipline leadership similar to what has been described above, it would appear important to maintain the formal assignment of leadership responsibilities to individuals on staff. Without such assignments a discipline would have difficulty maintaining its identity. Having some formal leadership is also important in order to develop programs for professional growth and organize regular meetings. In our experience this model has been very beneficial as a way of maintaining our discipline and providing good psychological services to children. The model as described here does not represent a finished or complete product of functioning without a designated supervisor, but it does provide a foundation for good practice of school psychology without a discipline-specific supervisor.

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Recruitment

Larry Gile

AEA 14

Abstract

The nature or character of the agency, its clients served, location, size, available facilities, and more, impact on recruitment and selection of school psychological services staff. Aspects of competition, length of contract, and anticipated case load, as well as how the agency defines the psychologist's role are also important considerations. This chapter investigates how supervisors of school psychological services in Iowa view some of the factors impinging upon recruitment/selection issues, and the supervisors' perceptions of the relative importance of some of these factors along with impediments to successful recruiting.

Introduction

No matter what the circumstances—a large potential applicant pool or a shortage of available prospects, rural or urban setting, attractive working environment or one with serious drawbacks—filling positions within a school psychological services section is a major undertaking. In the view of business (Sloma, 1977), the personnel function is an organization's most important function in that a business' results are directly traceable to the individuals who make up the organization. In the sense that an educational agency share many of the essentials of a "business," few would argue the appropriateness of applying that view to recruiting and selecting special education support staff. Few decisions on the part of the individual or group responsible for recruitment and staff selection will have greater impact on the quality (and quantity) of service ultimately provided, than those involved with the recruitment effort.

Failure at recruitment or errors in selection can obviously have a dramatic effect on an agency and the clients to whom it is responsible. The result can be underserved or unserved children, educators and parents; inappropriate, meaningless or damaging acts by a new staff member, or morale problems in existing staff resulting from either a "poor fit" in the person selected or increased case loads and pressures if a vacancy remains unfilled. In addition, as Lipham and Hoeh (1974) point out, careful practices of recruitment and selection will minimize the expense and time required by the agency and its administrators in meeting their responsibilities to help insure staff success. Lipham and Hoeh also contend that, "In nearly every instance, dismissal proceedings represent an indictment of selection, supervision, or evaluation practices." (p. 237) [emphasis added]

It would appear entirely appropriate that supervisors of school psychological services have responsibility and accompanying authority in the recruitment/selection process. In writing about the principal's role in obtaining teaching staff for schools, Lipham and Hoeh (1974) stress that the principal is the best qualified, and in the best position to judge how well a particular individual is likely to meet the expectations of a given teaching role. Therefore, the principal should not be denied meaningful participation in recruitment and selection. To borrow further from general education, Gorton (1976) makes the case that as long as the building administrator (could be read: school psychological services supervisor) is held accountable for staff performance, that administrator should be directly involved in the staff selection process.

Lipham and Hoeh (1974) also agree that the administrator who is close to the delivery of service should play a major role in recruitment and selection. They point out that while the board of directors may hold the ultimate prerogative of employment, the recruitment and selection functions become clouded if they are not consummated by administration at the service provision level. The administrators at this level are in the best position to select staff whose needs, dispositions and skills are congruent with the role demands.

In Iowa, the supervisors of school psychological services do have effective authority to decide to whom contracts are offered, and shoulder major responsibility for recruitment. They are acutely aware of what Lipham (1974) calls "the arduous task" when it comes to fulfilling those responsibilities. The necessity for decisions abounds, from the beginning of recruitment to final selection. The decisions made are affected by the circumstances mentioned above, as well as by many other obvious and not-so-obvious issues—the philosophy and "personality" of the organization, the need for various special strengths on a staff, the economic conditions of the agency and the area served—to list just a few.

There is importance in the recruitment and selection of staff not only with respect to those clients who will be directly served by the new staff member, but also in regard to perceptions and morale on the part of existing staff. Lipham and Hoeh (1974) point out that not only will a conscientious effort in the recruitment/selection endeavor minimize the changes of faulty selection, it will enhance the morale of the existing staff members as they view the hiring of replacements or additions as a systematic, careful procedure.

A brief study undertaken for this chapter attempted to address a variety of phenomenon affecting recruitment, and tap the experience of supervisors who have dealt with the issues involved. A questionnaire (Appendix A) aimed at securing data was drawn up and provided to all supervisors of school psychological services in Iowa area education agencies. The results reflect input from eleven of the fifteen area education agencies in Iowa. Issues addressed in the questionnaire included general views regarding staff recruitment, resources employed to secure applications, variables contributing to success in recruiting and impediments to success, agency support, the selection process, and determinants used in selection.

Current Practice

General statements made by supervisors reflected a range of concept and moods, from what might be interpreted as moderate to serve frustration or even depression over the recruiting phenomenon, to expressions suggesting, "What's the problem?" coming from the supervisor of an agency that had experienced little need to recruit for several years. That is not to say the supervisors who had experienced little need to recruit in the recent past were insensitive to the issues involved, only that there is disparity among various agencies and locations with respect to need. The less the need, obviously the less frustration encountered, even though professional concern was evident in all responses.

Supervisors reflected upon geographic and financial realities which they viewed as contributing to the task of recruiting. Supervisors noted that large turnovers and variables such as ruralness, lack of access to universities, noncompetitive salaries, dropping availability of recruits, last minute resignations, poor state "image," a limited number of recruits produced in the state, and the loss of professionals to surrounding states all contribute to the recruitment problem.

One supervisor stated recruitment was "hard work," and the most important aspect of his job. This was born out by the amount of time supervisors typically expend on recruiting activities to fill a single vacancy. The average amount of time spent among respondents was 16.7 hours, with a median of 20 hours and a range of eight to forty hours.

The perception was offered by one supervisor that hiring decisions can have more impact than could five years of staff inservice. Still another viewed the recruitment issue as a function of "enthusiasm, persistence and interview." While several supervisors indicated they had not personally experienced significant recruitment problems, the overwhelming tone of the majority was pessimistic or negative.

There was considerable variability to the responses on most questionnaire items. While it was not specifically analyzed, much of the variation have been primarily due to the factors of salary, location—urban versus rural—and proximity to university resources rather than to personal philosophies or styles of supervisors. Questionnaire responses indicated that supervisors from more rural and sparsely populated areas were the ones experiencing the greatest recruiting pressure. A study of recruitment and retention rates of mental health center professional staff found no clear differences in retention for urban and rural facilities, but that urban settings experienced an advantage in filling position vacancies (Eisenhart and Ruff, 1981). Some supervisors located in rural areas of Iowa might contend that retention is also unequal particularly with regard to younger employees engaged in their first employment following training.

Resources contributing to applicant pools, the number of supervisors using those resources, and the perceived productivity of these resources, are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1
Resources Contributing to Viable Applicant Pool

	No. Assigning 1-5 Ranking*	Mean Rank*	Median Rank*	Ranking Range	Supervisors Currently Utilizing**
1. Iowa university training program personnel	7	1.7	1.5	1-3	7
2. Iowa Dept. of Pub. Instr. sch.psych. consultant	8	2.5	2.5	1-4	7
3. Other than Iowa univ. training program personnel	4	2.3	1.0	1-4	4
4. Iowa state-wide newspapers	6	2.7	3.0	1-5	8
5. Other than Iowa university placement offices	3	3.3	4.0	1-5	6
6. National Assoc. of Sch. Psych. publications	2	3.5	3.5	2.5	3
7. Recruitment vistations at universities individually initiated by the supervisor	2	3.5	3.5	3-4	2
8. The encouragement of current staff to make personal colleague contacts	2	3.0	3.0	2-4	6
9. Other than Iowa major newspapers	2	4.5	4.5	4-5	2
10. Iowa university placement officers	2	4.5	4.5	4.5	5
11. Other than Iowa state professional association publications	1	4.0	4.0	4	2
12. Encouragement of current staff to make personal contact with their training program contacts	3	5.0	5.0	5	5
13. Recruitment visitation at universities' organized recruitment events	0	—	—	-	2
14. Local newspaper	0	—	—	-	1
15. Other than Iowa Dept. of Pub. Inst. personnel	0	—	—	-	1
16. Iowa Sch. Psych. Assoc. publications	0	—	—	-	1
17. Other than Iowa state employment services	0	—	—	-	1
18. Other: Special Net	0	—	—	-	1
19. Other national association publications	0	—	—	-	1
20. Recruitment "booths" at national meetings	0	—	—	-	0
21. The Iowa Job Service (state employment agency)	0	—	—	-	0
22. Private employment agencies	0	—	—	-	0

*Sources ranked one (1) to five (5) by supervisors, one (1)

For Iowa school psychology supervisors, the most productive resource in securing sound applicants appears to be Iowa university training program personnel. This source was ranked as first or second in terms of productivity by six out of seven of the supervisors and was being utilized by seven of the eleven reporting supervisors. This was the case even though several supervisors lamented the fact that Iowa universities were not producing sufficient numbers of graduates to meet the demand. Even in view of a perceived "outward migration," there would appear to be considerable value in recruiting within one's own state; other resources perceived as being productive included the Iowa Department of Public Instruction school psychology consultant and Iowa statewide newspapers. Out of state university training personnel and placement offices were also perceived as productive sources of applicants.

Resources which for the most part were viewed as less effective producers of viable applicants included National Association of School Psychologists publications, recruitment visitations at universities, the encouragement of current staff to make personal contacts with colleagues, other than Iowa major newspapers, Iowa university placement offices, other than Iowa state professional association publications, and the encouragement of current staff to make personal contacts with their training program contacts.

Some resources for applicants were not given a ranking by any participating supervisor and thus were not considered effective. These included local newspaper, other than Iowa Department of Public Instruction personnel, Iowa School Psychologists Association publications, recruitment "booths" at national meetings which included N.A.S.P., AND A.P.A., The Iowa Job Service Department, other than Iowa state employment services, and private employment agencies.

Even though the above resources were not ranked as among the more productive by any participating supervisor, the only resources not currently being utilized by one or more supervisor were other national organization's publication besides N.A.S.P., recruitment "booths" at national meetings, Iowa Job Service, and private employment agencies. This would suggest supervisors are blanketing the resources available and not relying on only a few top producers.

With respect to recruiting from universities, seven supervisors indicated there were no universities they tended to avoid. Three supervisors did avoid either universities from which they had experienced a history of receiving no applicants, those without approved programs, or universities on the East and West costs due to distances involved.

All supervisors participating in the survey indicated a personal visitation to the agency by the applicant was required, although one respondent stated exceptions to that general rule had been made. No agencies provide interviewing expenses to all applicants, and only one supervisor noted the policy of providing successful applicants with expenses reimbursement—with a limit of five hundred dollars.

There is a multiplicity of variables which impact on whether or not applicants are obtained and whether or not selected applicants are secured for service with the agency. Personal needs and preferences are at work in specific potential recruits, such as family in a given area or background amenable to a particular location or environment. There probably are many variables which affect choice. Table 2 presents Iowa supervisors' perceptions of these variables.

TABLE 2
Variables contributing to successful recruiting

Variable	No. Assigning 1-5 ranking*	Mean Rank*	Median Rank*	Range	No. Rated 1-5**
1. Salary	10	2.1	1.5	1-4	9
2. Location (urban, suburban, rural setting	8	2.0	2.0	1-3	7
3. Job description (emphasis/expectation of role	6	3.3	3.5	1-5	8
4. Fringe benefits	6	3.8	4.5	2-5	8
5. Access to university	4	3.0	2.5	2-5	7
6. Length of contract	4	3.0	3.5	3-5	5
7. Interviewers' personality	3	3.3	3.0	2-5	8
8. Position availability in state (other openings)	3	3.3	4.0	1-5	7
9. Position availability nationally	2	4.0	4.0	4	5
10. Caseload	2	4.5	4.5	4-5	3
11. Access to recreational activities	1	3.0	3.0	3	3
12. Agency support (secretarial, clerical, supervisory, etc.)	1	3.0	3.0	3	2
13. Local resources ("team" makeup, mental health centers, etc.)	0	—	—	-	3
14. Physical aspects of job site (facilities' aesthetics, etc.)	0	—	—	-	3

Table 2 reflects that responding Iowa supervisors viewed salary as the variable possessing the greatest influence on contributing to successful recruiting. Closely following, in descending order of importance were location (urban, suburban, rural setting), job description (emphasis/expectation of role), fringe benefits, accessibility to a university, length of contract, the interviewers' personalities, and position availability in the state (in-state competition for recruits).

A third, rough grouping of variables affecting successful recruiting, also in descending order of supervisor perceived import included positions available nationally (national competition for recruits), and caseload within the recruiting agency. Factors believed to impact only minimally on successful recruiting were access to recreational activities, agency support (secretarial, clerical, supervisory, etc.), and physical aspects of the job site (facilities' aesthetics, etc.). Interestingly, all variables presented in the questionnaire were rated by two or more of the nine respondents as having important impact on recruiting success, even those which were unranked (excluded from the group of five most important variables).

Narrative listings of significant impediments to successful recruiting tended to reflect the perceptions of variables contributing to success. Uncompetitive salary was exceeded only by "rural setting" in the number of times it was included in supervisors' listings of the three most important impediments. The third most frequently noted impediment was lack of access to a university. This frequency would suggest the "university connection" may have greater impact on successful recruiting than reflected by Table 2.

In pursuing the recruitment task, fully half of the responding supervisors indicated only moderate financial and material support from their agencies. Thirty percent ranked this support as maximal, but fifty percent ranked it midway between "minimal" and "maximal," on a five point scale. In contrast to this perceived weakness in agency support, ninety percent of the respondents indicated maximal or near maximal administrative moral support of the recruiting effort.

Supervisor preference for the amount of experience possessed by applicants was clearly one to three years. There was no clear distinction between the remaining category choices of first year persons, four to six years experience, over six years experience, and no preference.

Most responding supervisors indicated by their narrative responses that they did not seek or prefer applicants with a particular professional orientation, unless it would be a broad based, flexible, generalist foundation. One supervisor stressed what he preferred to label as a preferred "role expectation orientation," that being the possession of consultation and indirect service skills. Only one supervisor stressed the preference for a behavioral orientation, and one expressed a desire that the applicant be "expert" in "something." One supervisor expressed the desire that the applicant possess expertise that complemented the balance of the staff.

Supervisors were requested to list the three most important features about an applicant which they considered in making employment selections. Included in the listings were telephone recommendations from past building level supervisors, characteristics of the applicant's training program,

impressions from the interview, general personality, a perceived willingness to learn, the skill level possessed, style and skill in interpersonal relationships, a positiveness/enthusiasm/appreciation for the opportunity to work with children, enthusiasm for relocating, communication skills, poise, work ethic, specialized skill areas, intellectual curiosity, a willingness to cooperate, professional or related experience, and match with the community.

Personnel responsible for the recruiting and selection functions of an agency approach those tasks with tools they employ to facilitate their efforts and enhance the probability for success. Respondents to the questionnaire were asked to list those "tools," the definition of "tools" being left up to them. Included in the listings were a job description which included a great deal of decision making (not clarified as to whether this was intended to mean a job description for the school psychology role or for the supervisor), Iowa's reputation as having a well developed special education model, administrative support, a competitive salary and fringe benefit package, a well developed team approach to service delivery, brochures, broad advertising of position vacancies, the interview, a positive professional atmosphere, a positive reputation and relationship with universities, a good professional development package, and a role expectation that includes more than assessment.

Future Directions

One significant impression from the completed questionnaires used in this brief study was that of, if not despair, at least grave concern on the part of many of the responding supervisors. The themes most often repeated in various ways were the depressed economy and that phenomenon's impact resulting in an inability to complete with other areas and a declining image for the state.

Unfortunately, a downturn in economic conditions for a state, or even a portion of a state, often affects the availability of funds channeled into education. Because job performance on the part of candidates is so influenced by salary (Thornton, 1983), uncompetitive pay inevitably will tend a cast a pall on recruitment efforts. As discrepancies increase, the lower paying agencies find themselves at an increasing disadvantage when it comes to both recruitment and retention.

Thornton's (1983) investigation of job preferences suggested multiple factors related to a candidate's preference of one position over another. He reported that studies typically found the most important factors to be, in descending order: type of work, pay, co-workers, supervisor, advancement, security, working conditions, hours and benefits. Although there are numerous factors over which the supervisor has little or no control, such as salaries, fringe benefits and topography, other aspects of the school psychology role in the supervisor's agency might be addressed. Getzel (1983) cites studies that show graduate students continue to be highly motivated by the prospect of service, concern for the individual and the environment, and service to others, in spite of the growing impact of self-interest. This should be "good news" or perhaps a reaffirmation of belief held by supervisors.

With regard to role, it is not true that school psychology is school psychology is school psychology. Every supervisor is aware of the variations with respect to practitioner role. While it is no small task, it may be possible to affect the school psychology role within an agency, either on a global or on an individual basis. If role and expectations can be sufficiently altered to enhance position attractiveness, that may help secure applicants. Likewise, the supervisor can increase his or her attention to the staff's morale and conflict resolution and communications skills. This can contribute to enhancement of the "co-worker" element which was high on the list of preference factors.

There might be other no or low cost actions the supervisor could consider to add to the attractiveness of agency school psychology positions. The supervisor's personal style, personality, philosophy, interpersonal relationship skills, management style and other attributes impact upon attracting and holding on to staff. Employing introspection and other evaluation techniques might address the "supervisor factor," and enhance recruitment and retention. The factor of "advancement" could be studies to determine whether or not some type of recognition and reward embellishments might not be possible, such as "lead" staff members, team leader positions, specialties within the profession, or special assignments. Supervisors should be able to contribute to staff members' sense of job security and the conditions under which they labor, and perhaps even hours. Administrative support for tackling most of these issues would, or course, be vital.

Supervisors may need to become more creative and sophisticated with regard to recruitment efforts. While the list of resources to an applicant pool used in the study for this chapter was fairly exhaustive, and respondent supervisors did not, for the most part, add to it; it is hard to imagine the list was all inclusive. Supervisors should continue to search out resources. Not one of the resource sources contained in the questionnaire was utilized by all ten respondents. Many of the resources would appear to be of little potential value, but it might be worthwhile for supervisors to expand their searches.

One of the leading impediments to successful recruiting listed by supervisors was their location's proximity to university training. Perhaps the supervisors, in concert with other agency administrators, Department of Public Instruction personnel, university personnel and anyone else who would listen, could focus more attention and effort on developing and implementing unique or novel ways to address this issue. The obvious possibilities that come to mind are increased access to extension courses and utilization of telecommunications, more liberal study leave policies, and more innovative independent study resources.

Finally, while supervisors lament the economic conditions at work which produce a negative impact on recruitment and retention, and rightfully so, just how many are attempting to impact on this issue is open to question. In the author's experience, all too often professionals exhibit a degree of myopia when it comes to their communities. Virtually every area of the state and the state itself has people working to improve the greater economic climate. How many supervisors serve on industrial development commissions or chambers of commerce? How many attend community meetings which are designed to address economic and community livability issues? Some do become involved no doubt, but perhaps more could do so.

Summary and Implications

It would be fair to conclude from the study forming the basis of this chapter, that Iowa supervisors of school psychological services are not awash in a sea of optimism when it comes to the recruitment of staff. The economic condition of the state, mired as it is in an era of depressed agricultural times, has had its impact on both the reality and the mood of Iowa supervisors of school psychology. Certainly a perspective and the strategies formed in a period of staff shortages and intense competition for staff may contain attributes not to be found in times of surplus prospective labor pools and little competition. A similar study of supervisor attitudes and practices in an area of the country not experiencing Iowa's conditions might show a marked contrast to the results of this current study. Still, there would appear to be some possible applications to be gleaned from the Iowa supervisors' with respect to "best practices" in recruitment.

Increased agency support of the recruitment effort in the way of material and financial commitment might be helpful in some agencies. As the recruitment task becomes more arduous, it is only logical that greater expenditures of time and resources will be required to counter the impediments to success. The implication is contained in the study that recruitment is not expected to significantly improve for most agencies in Iowa until the state as a whole experiences an economic recovery. In the mean time, it is incumbent upon the supervisors to draw the current situation into sharp focus for agency administration and others concerned with the prospects of staff shortages, declining morale and increased stress.

There would seem to be some danger of supervisors and others bearing responsibility for recruitment to become immobilized to some extent in the face of bleak prospects and increasing frustration. Inaction is definitely not the most promising response to the situation. To be more effectively proactive supervisors will need to review their strategies, expand on their efforts, and ideally, work together with their colleagues and all persons in the state who have a commitment to education and the needs of children.

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The Supervisor as Practitioner

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AEA 15

Abstract

In this chapter the roles of the supervisor as a practitioner will be explored from two perspectives. The first will be the supervisor, who is a practitioner in a field-based assignment within the structure of the Area Education Agency. This might be an individual who has a half or three-quarters time supervisory position with the remaining time being spent in a school-based assignment. The second perspective will be the supervisor as a practitioner operating in the private sector where fees are charged for services rendered.

Introduction

The role of the supervisor as practitioner has not been widely researched in the literature. Strein in his review of the literature, points out that not until the School Psychology Review in the Fall of 1981 was the topic of supervision of school psychological services given much attention. In fact, as Strein's points out, it has been almost completely ignored.

In order to establish what might be considered a "Best Practice" in School Psychology Supervision, one may wish to first turn to the expectations school psychologists have of their supervisor. Using this as a ruler of sorts, a set of considerations for the person who is both a school psychology supervisor and practitioner might be established. Yanowitz (1981) indicated that if she were in the position of selecting the "perfect supervisor" she would want an individual who had been trained as a school psychologist and who had extensive field experience in a variety of educational and clinical settings. Robinson (1981) indicated that effective supervisors need to have exemplary interviewing and interpersonal skills as well as the ability to communicate ideas clearly. He also suggested that supervisors need to be excellent problem solvers who posses first hand knowledge of conditions in the field. It would appear from these authors that school psychologists in the field expect their supervisor to have had extensive field experience and knowledge of the kinds of activities and demands placed on psychologists on a day to day basis.

A supervisor of school psychological services in the state of Iowa must possess at least four years of experience in the field (Iowa Department of Education, 1986). However, one could legitimately argue that experience which is 10 or 12 or 15 years old would not provide that supervisor with a sound basis for understanding the current problems existing in the schools. It can be speculated that in order for a supervisor to truly understand the nature of the job, there is a concomitant necessity for that supervisor to be out in the field attempting to deal with problems similar to those of the staff.

At the same time, we should be aware that the staff tends to scrutinize supervisor's behaviors for reflections of the attitudes and beliefs of the supervisor concerning the services that are provided to schools and youngsters (Murphy, 1981). When the supervisor attempts to surpass minimum guidelines and work towards a best practices model the staff will also strive for excellence and quality. This writer feels that the supervisor does serve as a role model; when the staff recognizes that the supervisor has knowledge and is working with similar kinds of situations, the supervisor's credibility goes up with the staff. It is one thing to tell others how to perform, it is quite another to perform the task one self. If the supervisor can demonstrate effectiveness, the ability to lead others certainly can be enhanced. This is not to say that

all school psychology supervisors should continue in an ongoing direct contact provision of services. Murphy (1981) points out that supervisors have many other functions which are designed to enhance the effectiveness of the staff as well as to provide some accountability of staff activities to state, federal and local administrations. There is no question that these activities require a great deal of time and may inhibit the provision of services because of time constraints.

Current Practice

A survey was sent out to all school psychology supervisors in the state of Iowa to ascertain the current status of supervisors as practitioners. The result of that survey are listed in Table I.

TABLE I

AEA	DIRECT SERVICE	IMPROVES SUPERVISOR	PRIVATE PRACTICES
1	No	Yes	No
2	Yes	Yes	No
3	Yes	Yes	Yes
4	Yes	Yes	No
5	No	Yes	Yes
6	No	Yes	No
7	Yes	Yes	No
9	Yes	Yes/No	No
10	No	No	No
11	No	No	No
12	Yes	Yes	Yes
13	Yes	No	No
14	Yes	Yes	Yes
15	Yes	Yes	Yes
16	Yes	Yes	No

The Supervisor in Public Sector Practice

Two-thirds of the supervisors in the state of Iowa currently perform direct service in the public schools. The supervisors were asked if they feel that having some direct field contract improves their ability to perform as supervisor. Supervisors expressed the opinion that some field experience gives them the opportunity to practice what they preach (see appendix). It certainly provides an opportunity to try to carry out, on a first hand basis, the policies and procedures which supervisors impose upon their staff. It also allows them an opportunity to stay abreast of the field and to see what methods and techniques work well and which do not. Comments of the respondents suggested that contact with the real world is essential to being an effective supervisor. This writer's opinion

is that direct service also provides the opportunity to demonstrate competence to your staff; staff are much more willing to follow a leader who has been able to demonstrate effective competence in their field and is abreast of situations as they develop. It is also helpful, when supervising staff, that recommendations of the supervisor are based not on what is written in books, but on direct, personal successful experience. This certainly has the potential to, (you can lead a horse to water...) add credence and respect on the part of the staff.

Lest the reader be misled into believing that all supervisors should have a field experience, it should be pointed out that there are many negative possibilities to practicing as well as supervising. The supervisor, by his very position, is a role model. Not unlike the successful supervisor-practitioner, the supervisor who is unsuccessful, fails to maintain good work habits and standards, or shows frustration with implementation of agency policies and procedures also serves as the standard for the staff. Therefore, the supervisor functioning in the field is under a double burden. Number one, to be successful as a practitioner and, number two, to provide a standard of excellence which others may seek to imitate. A second problem with acting as a supervisor-pracatitioner is time constraint. Virtually, all of the supervisors indicate that a difficulty with performing both functions is that, at times, you can do justice to neither. Certainly, it is true when one is performing inservice programs for staff, develop program objectives and is properly supervising personnel in the field. A third issue, which may be be of great significance to the reader, relates to master contracts. When a supervisor serves as a practitioner, the waters become somewhat muddied as to their position - staff versus administration. This is not to say that this is a we and us issue, but this concern does frequently come up between staff and administration and was noted by several supervisors.

Directors of Special Education, who administer the entire support service program, also seem to be of a mixed mind regarding the role of a supervisor as practitioner. In the smaller Area Education Agencies, which have fewer staff, more Directors tend to support the motion of having a supervisor who also is a field practitioner at least part-time. The amount of time ranges from one-third in the field to one-half time field practitioner. In a larger Area Education Agency which may have 25 to 50 psychologists, there is greater tendency for the Director to want full-time administrators for the school psychological services program. It would seem obvious with that many staff to supervise, and having the staff serving schools in 10 to 12 counties there is a greater necessity to have a person exclusively performing an administrative function.

There is, at this time, a debate going on in the state of Iowa regarding the amount of supervision/administration necessary to carryout the goal to providing services to children. Many legislators in the state are taking the position that there are too many administrators and concerted efforts have been made to reduce the ranks of administration. While this effort is primarily being directed towards local school districts, the Area Education Agencies are also being examined with regards to the number of administrators they have in relation to the staff and pupils they serve. During the 1985-86 school year, Area Education

Agency 11 in Ankeny and Area Education Agency 13 in council Bluffs did not have a person designated as a school psychological services supervisor. Under these conditions, certain administrative functions were carried out by others rather than a school psychology supervisor. It is unknown, at this time, what implication this has for the future or what impact that this had on services being provided in those AEAs. It is safe to conclude from this chapter's survey that having a supervisor serve also as a practitioner may be a mixed blessing; there is no unanimous consensus of opinion among supervisors themselves or their directors as to which course of action, supervisor-practitioner or supervisor only, is most effective. The data, however, seems to support the fact that most supervisors and directors of Special Education feel that at least a part-time field assignment is beneficial to overall performance of the agency.

The Supervisor in Private Practice

The issue of the school psychologist as a private practitioner is widely debated nationally. Because of the issue of third party payment, the debate of whether somebody with a sub-doctoral degree is a "qualified" psychologist is likely to rage for some time to come. Several organizations provide a registry of psychologists which outside agencies or clients may draw from when wanting services which may fall outside the perview of the Area Education Agency. Private practice is an area which appears to be extremely muddy, particularly with regard to the population potentially served and the types of problems which can be dealt with. While no Area Education Agency contacted expressly prohibited the private practice of psychology, many expressed concerns about conflict of interest and visibility. In all cases the school psychology supervisors referred to the professional conduct manual published by the National Association of School Psychologists (1985) as a guideline to the private practice of school psychology. The conduct manual suggests the following (page 5):

1. That psychologists who are employed in both the public and private sector must adhere to the standard of professional ethics and recognize that they must be able to separate the roles that exist in the public and private sector.

2. That a supervisor or any psychologist while employed in a public school setting may not accept a fee or any other form of renumeration for professional work with clients who are entitled to such service through the school where the school psychologist is currently assigned.

   While the school psychologist supervisor may not have a specific assignment within a school or may not have a school assignment at all, it would seem from this provision that it would be incumbent upon the supervisor to inform the parent that they have the right to services, free of charge, through the Area Education Agency. Again, the issue becomes crowded. For example, if a youngster is having serious family problems with his parents is that youngster entitled to some counseling through the school psychological services in the school?

School psychologists are paid out of special education monies and it could be legitimately argued that, as long as this youngster is performing appropriately at school, this problem is clearly outside the domain of the school psychologist and the youngster would not be entitled to such services through the Area Education Agency. However, a parent might ask the psychologist who serves a school whether a youngster could be provided counseling. The psychologist could indicate that the youngster could not be provided counseling through the school but would agree to see the child privately. There are those who might raise the question of conflict of interest. Under these conditions the supervisor-practitioner must be extremely cautious in accepting this family on a private fee basis. Again, we must keep in mind the fact that the supervisor does serve as a role model and if the slightest hint of unethical conduct should surface, it would effect not only the supervisor personally but potentially the entire school psychological staff.

Another possible dilemma would be in the situation where a youngster may be having educational difficulty but because of the parents' particular attitude or belief system they may wish that the youngster not be seen in school. Because they know of you as a supervisor, they may wish to seek a private educational evaluation through you. Again, the ethical consideration concerns providing a service which the youngster would be eligible for free of charge. If the supervisor would choose to see that youngster as per the parents request for a fee, the information would be confidential. Without parent permission, the information could not be shared with the Area Education Agency which hires the school psychologist supervisor nor the school, its school psychologist or other staff. This would set up a potentially serious rift between the supervisor and the staff and between the Area Education Agency and the schools. While there may be no ethical question involved in this situation, certainly the implications for major difficulties are readily apparent. The prudent supervisor would be wise to think long and hard before agreeing to perform services in this particular type of situation.

3. The supervisor has an obligation to inform the parents of free and/or mandated services available from the public schools before providing the services for pay. The supervisor has the right to refer the parents to other practitioners or to simply refuse to provide this service when the potential for conflict may rise.

4. A supervisor who is engaged in employment in public as well as the private sector must clearly separate the functions by providing any private practice both outside of the hours of contractive employment as well as outside of the physical boundaries of that public employment. Again, this is designed to insure that there is no apparent conflict of interest.

5. The supervisor who engages in private practice should not use any materials belonging to the Area Education Agency or school districts without their authorization. The prudent supervisor who engages in private practice would be well-advised to maintain an office separate from where he or she is employed publicly so as to insure that there is no hint of improper conduct.

6. School psychologists and supervisors may enter into rental agreements with school districts to use space privately but, as the code clearly points out, this may be criticized as improper and can be very confusing to the client.

The code (1985) p. 6 goes on to discuss the delivery of services and how those services should be announced or advertised. In no way may the supervisor, or any school psychologist, use the public sector to solicit clients for private practice. It is also the clear indication that any time a supervisor in private practice is working with a youngster, that work has some direct bearing on the youngsters performance at school. A release should be obtained from the parents to allow that psychologist to directly consult with the school or school psychologist working with that case. This will prevent confusion or misunderstanding regarding any recommendations, advice or information given to the parent by the supervisor in private practice.

The code does speak specifically as to the exclusion of any particular segment of the population that the school psychologist supervisor, operating in private practice, should not work with. Clearly, however, any school psychology supervisor working with youngsters or with school related problems is treading a rather thin line if they are providing those services for a fee basis. It might be simpler to define the private practice as limited to either adults or non-academic problems, in order to maintain a clear separation of public and private practice.

The primary issue as with any other group of psychologists, is that of training and competence. School psychology supervisors in private practice should only provide those services for which they are fully trained and capable of carrying out. While in the state of Iowa it is certainly possible to offer services privately as a certified school psychologist, the individual serving as a practitioner may well wish to consider the possibility of being licensed or certainly registered as a services provider. In addition to obtaining that level of recognition or certification, the practitioner should also seek private liability insurance to protect himself from any malpractice suits which may arise from the provision of private services.

Board policies of Area Education Agencies pertaining to the provision of private services are also collected. These are compiled in Appendix B. Those agencies which do not have current board policies rely upon the MSP standards for operational guidelines (telephone communication with supervisors). Analysis of board policies suggests a very close censensus of opinion regarding how private services should be provided and they all

appear to be in compliance with the recommended practices provided by the National Association of School Psychologists (1985). It is interesting to note that under the policy of Area Education Agency #2 the employee is mandated to discuss any secondary employment or activity with their supervisor (for a supervisor this would be the director) prior to engaging in that activity. The director then would have the authority to approve or disapprove of the secondary employment. Conflicts with provision of services that would be available to the parents during the normal workday are grounds for disapproval. It is interesting to note that the staff member must sign a conference report documenting the details of that secondary employment and this would presumably be on file in their central office.

There is no clear-cut answer to the question of whether a supervisor should or should not participate in private practice. Clearly there are benefits that can be derived from such employment beyond purely monetary concerns. The supervisor in private practice has an opportunity to demonstrate the effectiveness of the school psychological training to professionals outside the public school sector. This writer is privately engaged in a pediatric practice which allows the opportunity to merge medical as well as psychological information in providing services to children. At the same time, this practice has given the medical and, at times, the legal communities the opportunity to recognize the value that school psychologists can have in determining a course of action for a particular child. A second benefit is that it provides supervisors an opportunity to practice those skills and techniques for which they have been trained. By doing so they do not lose contact with their "roots" and can share with their staff the current thinking in other professional fields. This can lead to the develop of good, solid relationships which may help their staff in cases that they are currently engaged in solving. A fourth benefit is the opportunity to utilize that private practice and the exercise of those skills for purposes of inservice training of the staff thus increasing their skills and hopefully their effectiveness in the field.

Negative possibilities are also present in this engagement. One possible negative effect, of course, is that if the supervisor fails in private practice to exercise good ethical practice, it will reflect negatively not only upon the supervisor but upon the perception of the field of school psychology in general. While this may be a rather harsh judgment, it is true that people often make generalized perceptions of a field based upon their experience with one or two members of that field. The second possible negative influence has already been touched upon, in that there must be no hint of conflict of interest and it must be clear to the staff that the supervisor's primary concerns and interest lie in the advancement of the field of school psychology and the department, rather the advancement of the supervisor in the private sector. If both can be advanced, this would be ideal and certainly should be strived for by any supervisor operating within the private sector. A third negative possibility is time constraint. The supervisor engaged in private practice may well be called upon to testify in court proceedings which generally take place during the day. This would require time away from the job which could create some dissatisfaction with both the supervisor's superiors as

well as the staff. This practice also the possibility merging their time in the public sector with the time necessary for the private sector which could certainly be viewed very negatively by the agency for which the supervisor works. The fifth possible problem is simply the question of time. The supervisor who is engaged in performing their duties throughout the day and is also involved in performing the services at night may find little time for relaxation and "getting away from the job". This could impact on their ability to perform their job responsibilities in both sectors and as a result reduce their overall effectiveness as a professional psychologist.

In summary, private practice can provide an exciting change of pace but should be considered from all angles before it is systematically engaged in, at least in any significant degree.

Future Directions

Given the nature of the current practice in the state of Iowa and some brief coverage of what is possible, this section will attempt to draw some conclusions about what is likely to be the case in the future.

As has been previously mentioned, the state of Iowa is taking a hard look at the number of administrators necessary to supervise staff currently practicing in the field. With the monetary constraints present in the state of Iowa, and the fact that education in general is being looked upon with a rather jaundiced eye both nationally and locally, it is quite possible that supervisors will be expected to maintain at least a small direct services load in the near future. As this writer has attempted to point out, this has many more positive possibilities than negative ones. Area Education Agencies are, to a certain degree, mandated to serve the needs of the local school districts; these school districts often determine the relative value of the services by the number of direct contacts they see made by Area Education Agency personnel. It is certainly possible that as supervisors maintain a caseload, local school districts may well see them as providing useful services and thus be more positively pre-disposed towards their evaluation of Area Education Agency Support Services.

Another factor that needs to be considered is the fact that, at the current time, the school population in the state of Iowa continues to drop. It would seem logical that with less youngsters to be served, there will be less staff needed to serve them. This could have the potential of freeing supervisors to provide some other direct services and also at the same time give them the opportunities to practice their craft in the school.

In the private sector, the competition for dollars and clients is likely to maintain its intensity. The supervisor who has less than a doctoral degree may find it progressively more difficult to get employment in the private sector due to the increasingly firm positions being taken by the American Psychological Association and the Iowa Psychological Association (fueled in part by insurance companies) to limit the range of personnel eligible for third-party payments. It is also true that with the increased amount of stress clearly being experienced by families in the

state of Iowa due to the economic times, the need for supervisors who are also well trained in practical therapeutic interventions may well increase. School psychology supervisors are role models and are going to increasingly be in the position to demonstrate to the public both in the school environment and the private sector that they can provide services to families. The entire field of school psychology is relatively new when compared with the history of clinical or even counseling psychology. As such, it is still an emerging field and supervisors in the forefront of that emergence and evolvement are in the best position to be able to demonstrate the health of the field of school psychologoy as well as to facilitate its growing maturity.

Summary and Implications

This short chapter has attempted to review the current status of the school psychologist as practitioner in the state of Iowa. The information presented certainly is not uniform in its consistency. There are differences of opinion of how much time a supervisor should spend as a practitioner and even whether or not the supervisor should be a practitioner at all. Future financial constraints may mandate an increasing expectation of that role. Supervisors are role models and as the field of school psychology continues to grow from adolescents to adulthood, the supervisor who has experienced the same growing pains as the staff may well be in the best position to provide leadership in the developmental process. Clearly, school psychology supervisors must make the effort to be current with recent changes in methods, materials, and therapeutic techniques in order to provide the lastest in technological improvement to their staffs. The supervisor must make the effort to keep apprised of the most up-to-date technology and not let the field be so removed from him that he ceases to be an effective leader or forgets the difficulties that often accompany the school psychologist in his endeavor to provide school psychological services.

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Resolution of Staff Problems

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AEA 16

Introduction

By the very nature of their profession, school psychologists might be expected to have extremely well developed skills at resolving problems and conflicts. The identification of handicapped children, the planning and providing of interventions and other such activities require that the school psychologist be aware of conflicts and be able to handle those conflicts in order to be successful. Dealing constructively and positively with grieving parents, hostile teachers, principals and other professionals who may have different motivations and methods in dealing with children is a major component of being a successful school psychologist. In short, problem solving skills are very important to the functioning of the school psychologist.

With this in mind, it could be easily assumed that a supervisor of school psychological services would have a fairly easy time with conflict resolution as his/her staff are all experts at problem solving. From my own experiences as a supervisor and from the information supplied from a questionnaire completed by other Iowa supervisors, this assumption is primarily true. Also, for the most part, the number of problems reaching the supervisory level is relatively small. However, some are not solved at the staff level; these are usually more intense and more involved than the usual staff problems. This paper will deal with the concerns of a supervisor handling these types of problems. Information concerning this issue was obtained from the supervisors of school psychological services in Iowa through the use of an open-ended questionnaire. It should be noted that this information was subjected to exhaustive evaluation, but rather was reviewed for general trends and ideas.

In general, this paper will attempt to address each of the following problem areas: legal, negotiated contract, within discipline, across agencies, and human nature. All who responded to the questionnaire were supervisors of school psychological services or head psychologists. Their agencies range from being small to quite large with psychological staffs numbering from only a handful to well over fifty. The supervisor of psychological services is usually in a middle management position which means that he/she may be called upon to address problems both coming up from the staff and coming down from "on high". This suggests that, for the most part, the supervisor does not have absolute authority in any given situation and must be prepared to have his/her decisions questioned by others with more authority. In fact, in the larger agencies it is more likely that a personnel director may handle many of the problems than the supervisor of the psychological staff. It is interesting to note that one of the agencies had a formal board policy that indicated exactly how a staff problem should be addressed.

Before addressing specific problem areas, some general trends that emerge from the questionnaires should be reviewed. The first of these is the strong desire expressed by most of the supervisors for staff to attempt to handle many problems at their level. The need for supervisor intervention appears to be a step taken after attempts to solve the problem have failed at the staff level. This staff level approach does not hold true for legal and negotiated contract problems as many of these cannot be addressed at the staff level. However, for the remaining areas, much can be said to legitimize this approach.

A second trend that is found in the questionnaire responses is the process that most supervisors go through in dealing with a staff problem. This broadly parallels the formal negotiation process used in Iowa. First, the supervisor will meet with the staff member in a fact-finding situation to determine the nature and the extent of the problem. Specific information will be taken and, if necessary, further investigation will be done with the general idea being to offer the staff members suggestions they could use to best handle the situation themselves. Clarification of the problem and seating ownership of the problem are major aims of this process. If this fails, the second step involves meditation. The parties involved with the problem are brought together and each is allowed to state their case. From this interchange of information and ideas, mutually acceptable solutions are developed and the problem is solved. If the problem is not resolved at this level, the next step closely follows the procedures used in arbitration. Both sides of an issue present their arguments and proposed solutions to a third party who in turn produces the final resolution to the problem. This finding is usually binding and forces a solution onto the parties involved. In some cases, the supervisor acts as the arbitrator but this is not always the case. Depending on the nature and the scope of the problem, a panel of persons or a person in higher authority such as a director or chief administrator may play this part. It is clear that most supervisors do not like to reach this level in the resolution of staff problems. It should also be noted that legal and negotiated contract problems are not well addressed by this procedure even though their flow toward resolution may follow very similar courses of action.

A final thought expressed by many supervisors in their responses to the questionnaire was that they tried hard to represent their profession, their agencies, and their staffs in problem situations in the most positive and constructive manner possible. It appears that the need to "keep the peace" is very important to some agencies but not at the expense of good professional practice.

Current Practice

Legal Problems

The relative frequency of all staff problems is low and in this particular area, the incidence appears to be extremely low. Most of the supervisors had difficulty with coming up with examples they had had in this area. Discussion with school psychologists being subpoenaed into court for various reasons were most commonly offered but most of these instances were not related to staff problems. Most supervisors saw their responsibilities in this area to be at best a fact-finder and that such difficulties should clearly be advanced up the

line to the agency's legal staff as soon as the problem has become an issue. These problems have the potential to be played out in a courtroom setting in which a very specific set of rules apply. It is important that the supervisor and his "troubled" staff member receive legal consultation as soon as possible. The responsibility of the staff member in this situation would be one of making those in charge aware of a possible situation that could end up in court as soon as possible.

One last word in this area applies to criminal charges and/or arrest. It is extremely important for those involved to seek legal representation and have an attorney present when information is being asked for by the police and so forth. Because of the nature and the setting of our work as school psychologists, it would be conjectured that a staff person could be accused of some type of sexual misconduct with a child and arrested for it. In this situation, it is doubtful that the supervisor would take the role of fact-finder as it is not his/her responsibility to solve this problem. It would appear reasonable for the supervisor to advise the staff member to obtain legal counsel as soon as possible and provide reasonable support.

Negotiated Contract Problems

Negotiated contract difficulties are probably the easiest of problems faced by supervisors to deal with as the procedures and scope of these are usually very well defined by the contract itself. The areas of conflict are called grievances and the procedures used to handle these are generally developed as a part of the negotiations. With this in mind, the scope of these grievances are often limited to the alleged violations of conditions covered in the contract. Office location, specific job assignments, and performance evaluation are a few examples of areas where there are potential for grievances to be filed against a supervisor.

From the supervisors' questionnaire responses, it appears that they all have a specified grievance policy in their agency and that for the most part, they follow a similar pattern. The first step in this process is usually an informal meeting with the offended staff and the supervisor at which resolution of the problem is attempted. There is some variation at this level as some agreements allow for the offended staff person to send a representative in his/her place while others do not. If a resolution cannot be reached at this level, the second step often is that the staff member or his/her union representative files a formal complaint with the upper level administration. In Iowa, this would be a director or the chief administrator while in other states, this could be a superintendent of schools or director of personnel. The formal complaint is usually a written document that describes the wrongful situation and indicates what part of the contract has been violated. In most cases, the administrator has a set number of days to respond to this formal complaint. It should be pointed out that in some cases, this step may have two levels involved. In these cases, the grievance is routed through a person such

as the director of special education, prior to being presented to the chief administrator of the agency. If agreement is still not reached at this level, many contract procedures call for the use of outside arbitration to solve the matter. This can be a very formal procedure which parallels a courtroom trial situation; witnesses are called and testimony is given. The arbitrator, using the gathered information, makes a decision and the parties involved are required to accept it. This is usually quite expensive and time consuming but does accomplish a final solution of a problem. In some cases, the civil courts might be used as a fourth step to over-rule an arbitrator's decision.

It should be noted that not all school psychologists work under a negotiated contract. In these cases, there are usually a board policy that would address the grievance notion. It is common in these cases to use the board itself as the arbitrator in the third step rather than to use an outside person.

In both of these situations, the supervisor is usually the first person contacted and his/her responsibilities appear to be those of clarification and fact-finding. If situations cannot be corrected at this level, supervisors should be prepared to justify their actions to those above them in the administration ranks and be prepared to face intense questioning from many parties. If the problem situation goes to the third level, the role of the supervisor switches to that of a witness. The supervisor must also be prepared to accept the final results and implement them.

Within Discipline Problems

Within discipline problems are those where the conflict is within the discipline of school psychology and usually involve disagreement between and among various psychologists on a staff. These problems can be related to conflicts between the supervisor and a staff member or members reflecting disagreement on the provision of school psychological services. Examples of such problems would be disagreements as to the equality of job assignments and "best practice" for a particular situation such as the documentation of a given situation or selection of a preferred treatment. In general, these problems reflect issues of debate within school psychology and because of this, are not as easily addressed as some other types of problems. Often, the answers to these problems do not involve determination of right or wrong but rather probability statements as to which course of action is most likely to produce the best results. The training, the experiences and the personalities of those involved are all confounding variables in these disputes and the supervisor is right in the middle of it all.

Psychology is a very wide field and has produced many schools of thoughts on the "why's and wherefore's" of human behavior. In our training we are taught to use a systematic approach to investigate a problem and to openly question everything that is observed. Also as a part of this training, numerous books are read and seemingly countless journal articles are reviewed. Each of these either support or dispute some aspect of one's beliefs concerning human behavior. Psychologists are constantly in debate over the merits of one theory of behavior over another and attempt to be painfully honest when they find some bit of information that does not coincide with another's theory. The

training institution is usually the variable that controls the degree of acceptance of one school of thought over another. With the above in mind, it is suggested that psychologists are by nature prone to question others as to their actions and to be somewhat argumentative as to the benefits of others behaviors.

School psychology is not different than the other fields of psychology as there are numerous approaches to the study of children in the educational setting and again, the training institutionally will set the parameters of beliefs for the psychologists they train. The use of projective tests, neuropsychological assessment, the use of cognitive behavioral modification methods are just a few examples of areas where school psychologist trainers may vary drastically in their preparation of new psychologist. As a supervisor of school psychological services, one quickly becomes aware of these differences as they relate to one's own training as well as one's staff. The supervisor might solve this problem by hiring all the psychologists from one training program; the one he/she attended, but this is not a realistic solution. Therefore, the supervisor must be prepared to accept and allow for variations in the provision of psychological services based on these differences. It should be noted that most training programs in school psychology have similar core courses and, in general, commonality in the training of school psychologists. The differences stated previously would hopefully be mild ones and be in the nature of friendly debates. As the leader of the discipline, the supervisor has a right to demand certain levels of performance from his/her staff and to set standards as to the provision of school psychologist services but there is a need to temper this with the knowledge of the variability of the field of psychology in general, and school psychology in particular.

Of the examples of within discipline problems given earlier, the one that dealt with equality of job assignments was by far the most common problem related by the supervisors in their responses. In defense of the supervisors, allotting job assignments has to be one of the most difficult tasks of the position. Number of referrals, number of students, number of buildings, number of special educational programs, and mileage between buildings are some of the tangible factors that are used in this procedure but there are many other variables that are not so objective. The personalities of those involved, history of services in a particular building, and acceptance of psychological services within a particular building or school system are a few examples. Individual differences across psychologists in terms of skill levels, motivation and abilities play a major part in the supervisor's consideration of assignments. According to the supervisors' responses, staff assignment is an area of some concern. The supervisor's role in disputes of assignments would be one of clarifying the concern and then providing information as to why assignments were made as they were. Adjustments could be made if errors in judgment had occurred or if one of the objective values was found to be misleading. It would be hoped that this type of problem would be brought to the supervisor's attention as soon as possible so that he/she can clarity his/her decisions with the involved staff. In most cases, the supervisor makes the assignments and would act like an arbitrator in coming up with a final solution to a disagreement in this area.

The second type of within-discipline problem relates to "best practice" concerns in the provision of school psychological services. Supervisors have the right and the responsibility to establish and maintain standards of job performance for the school psychologists and hopefully they do so using professional standards and ethics as guidelines. Also, it would be trusted that the supervisor would use the expertise of those on his/her staff to keep these guidelines and standards up to date and consistent with current practices. Job descriptions should be reflective of these standards and the individual psychologist held accountable for them. Armed with these standards, the supervisor must first act as a fact-finder and clearly identify the parameters of the problem area. If the problem is found to be that of substandard performance, the obvious solution is to work with the individuals involved to bring their services up to an acceptable level. However, as is often the case, these problems are related more to different interpretation of a standard than disagreement with it. Again the supervisor must clarify the situation and present a solution that meets the needs of those involved which is consistent with the standards of service prooision(?).

So far the discussion has related primarily to conflict between a staff member and a supervisor. It is highly possible for two psychologists on a staff to be in conflict with each other. For example, a psychologist does an evaluation on a child in School A and from this, makes several recommendations including the consideration of individual counseling and resource level placement in a behavior disordered program. Before services begin, the child moves to School B where another psychologist reviews all the records and writes a folder notation that the child in question does not need the counseling and has not displayed a need for the special educational programming. Obviously, these two people are in disagreement concerning the psychological and educational needs of this child. Because of the extremeness of this example, it would be important for the supervisor to be made aware of the situation and seek clarification from the two parties. Given that there is no clear-cut resolution to this disagreement, the supervisor would work toward mediating the problem between the two staff members and if this is unsuccessful, work as an arbitrator to solve the problems. Most staff disagreements are not going to be at this level and one would hope that most would be resolved at the staff level as friendly debates. The frequency of really serious conflicts between two staff members is fairly low as reported by Iowa's supervisors of school psychologists and one even reported that in several years of supervision that this had never occurred.

Across Disciplines Problems

Across disciplines problems relate to those that arise out of psychologists dealing with professional groups outside of school psychology. PL 94-142 demands that multidisciplinary teams be used to evaluate and program for handicapped youngsters and the school psychologist no longer plays the role of the "Lone Ranger". School social workers, audiologists, speech clinicians and special education consultants of all types as well as the various teachers and school administrators are now a part of these procedures. As one would suspect the more people involved in a given situation the more likely a problem will arise. Across discipline problems come in many shapes but a common thread is often a concern of the role definition or "territoriality". She did what I was suppose to do" or "he did not do what I thought he should have done" are phrases used in this type of battle.

Another aspect cited often by the supervisors were distribution of work in this area with the general idea that not all disciplines within an agency work as hard as others.

An awareness of these types of problems and their resolution should be of great importance to the supervisor of psychological services. Often, problem situations result in changes in policies, revised job descriptions, and so forth that can impact greatly on the types and amount of psychological services provided by an agency. It is only fair to note at this point that the frequencies of across discipline of problems have decreased through the years since the beginning of PL 94-142; disciplines have learned to work together in a better fashion. It is hoped that the supervisor of school psychological services has played a very active role in these procedures to insure the provision of good services to children and to make sure professional standards and guidelines are followed. Unlike within-discipline problems, the supervisor is not the only management level individual involved and cannot act as an arbitrator without the consent of others that are involved. The supervisor is no longer the final decision maker.

In response to the questionnaire, it was often stressed by the supervisors that if two staff members, be they psychologists or a psychologist and another professional, had a conflict with each other, the first step would be for those people to sit down and try to reach agreement on their own. If no resolution comes from this, then the staff members are usually encouraged to present their problem to their respective supervisors. In this meeting, the supervisor often acts as a fact-finder, clarifying what the problem is and offering possible courses of action to take. Communication between the two supervisors involved usually takes place at this time with a sharing of stated concerns and possible solutions. The staff members are again encouraged to try and settle the dispute at this level using the information provided by the supervisors. If that fails, then the next step involves a meeting of the troubled staff and the supervisors and out of which would come a mediated solution to the problem. If this meditation fails, then someone in higher authority such as a director or chief administrator is called in to act as an arbitrator. Resolution of a problem at this level can lead to changes in policies and procedures.

As stated earlier, the amount of conflict across disciplines has appeared to decrease across the years as the various disciplines involved in the provision of special educational services become more comfortable with their roles and functions. They have learned the basic fact that there are more then enough children out there to work with and that by working together more of these children can be served. There will continue to be disagreements regarding the position of best practices but hopefully this will be at the level of friendly debate rather than all out war. The supervisor must have the knowledge to understand what is going on in an across discipline conflict and he/she must be willing to take responsibility for the behavior of the psychologist involved. With this in mind, the supervisor must be able to respond appropriately in terms of agency policy and professional standards. The staff member must be willing to have his/her behavior held up to these standards and policies for evaluation and be willing to accept the final solution.

Across Agencies Problems

In this area, problems that staff have arising from dealing with agencies other than their own will be discussed. Departments of human/social services, hospital and clinics providing diagnostic services to children and private practitioners are a few examples of these agencies. In Iowa, school systems could be added to this list as most school psychologists are hired by an independent intermediate service provider, the Area Education Agency. Problems in this area are very frustrating as they are often brought to the attention of the supervisor on a case specific basis but in fact represent a problem of philosophy or attitude difference between the two agencies. For example, a child is seen at a hospital clinic and the team there decides that the youngster is learning disabled and they instruct the parents to enroll their child in a program for learning disabled youngsters upon their return home. The parents attempt to do what they have been told but find out that they may have to go through a local evaluation and that, because of differences in definitions used by the two groups, their child may not meet the criteria for this type of placement. This ends up with angry people all around and each agency firmly entrenched with the idea they did what was correct and proper according to their own standards and guidelines.

In situations like this, the supervisor is usually seen as acting as a fact-finder, reviewing the facts from as many angles as possible before acting. He/she must be prepared to support his/her staff member's actions as well as the standards and policy of the agency. The supervisor may try to mediate the situation with those involved including personnel from the other agency and an acceptable agreement can sometimes be in reached in these matters. However, if this does not occur the supervisor must be prepared to defend his/her staff member's actions or agency policy to a third party such as a department of public instruction or possibly, to a hearing officer. At that time, the supervisor would again find himself in the fact-finder role. The final decision would come from a source outside of the discipline. This type of problem does not occur often but when it does, it causes major concerns.

When school psychologists are not hired by the schools they work in, the schools themselves may be at odds with the psychologist's agency. Most commonly a school administrator, disliking some action or recommendation made by the school psychologist, calls the supervisor of psychological services to complain. The supervisor acts as a fact-finder and attempts to clarify the questions and concerns of the situation. He/she will probably listen to the complaint, ask a few questions and then, review the situation with the psychologist involved. From this information, a course of action would be determined. Most supervisors would like to have staff solve problems at their level of interaction with others and in this case, the psychologist may be requested to confer with the other party to see if a solution can be reached. If this does not solve the problem, the supervisor must be prepared to either defend the actions of his/her staff member or present an alternative action to correct the situation. Meditation would be seen as the major tool in this situation. Finally, if a mediated solution is not possible, then possibly higher authorities on each side should be called in to arbitrate the problem. From the questionnaire comments, it appears that most of these problems are solved in the first two stages.

In summary, it should be noted that there is more cooperation among agencies than disagreements and that most agencies work together to try and solve problems prior to their occurrence. But when across agency problems arise it can be a frustrating time for a supervisor. His staff member may be in the right and there may be no way to gain satisfaction in a particular situation. The staff member may feel that the supervisor is not supportive of his/her actions which is not the case. Good communication with staff is important during these times.

Human Nature Problems

This area was labeled human nature problems for the lack of a better word or phrase. These problems are those that occur across all other areas and relate to situations where the information shared was correct but the personalities of those involved did not allow for the transfer of knowledge. In other words, what was done in the situation was procedurally correct but something occurred that did not allow the process to go on. Personality clashes and poor communications skills are often cited as the stumbling blocks in these conflicts. Sometimes, these involve a single episode and other times, they continue through the years. To the supervisor, these are extremely frustrating because in most cases, they relate to the staff member's personality and style and not to their knowledge base. The degree at which some of these variables can be changed would directly reflect the success of the supervisor to come up with a workable solution. Frankly, in most cases, it is easier to manipulate assignments than to change personalities.

Another concern brought up the supervisors in this area relates to individual psychologist's response to the job. In Iowa, an end of year report is compiled by each supervisor to send to the state. This report covers all the activities normally done by school psychologist from the various types of assessments to the provision of inservice. When doing this, one is always amazed by the range of duties performed in any one category. These numbers seem to say that some psychologists do a lot more across the board than others. Obviously, most do what is required of them but some do much more than this. As a supervisor, it is frustrating to know that someone has the skills and knowledge to be much more productive in their work and they choose not to do so. There are ways and means to get staff to produce more in a given situation but these are not solutions to chronic problems. These appear to be a part of the person's own work ethics and cannot be changed in any great fashion. Again the supervisor must attempt to adjust and control for these variables by matching psychologist with assignment.

Summary and Implications

In summary, it should be noted that procedures used by most of supervisors in dealing with the resolution of staff problems follow a fairly consistent path. First an attempt was made to clarify the problem situation through fact-finding which may allow the staff themselves to solve the problem. Meditation was offered as the next step and arbitration was seen as a last

resort. If the problems occur across agency or across legal boundaries, the role of the supervisor in offering solutions may be reduced. In these situations, the supervisor must be prepared to live with the outcomes and also prepare his/her staff. Communication is extremely important and is the cornerstone for most of the happy solutions that come out of unhappy situations. Finally, it should be noted that in comments to the questionnaire that was often written that the frequencies of the types of problems discussed are not large and that, in general, the areas of concerns are relative few. So, it would appear that there is much more harmony out there than discord.